

SPECIAL CANADA DAY REPORT

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

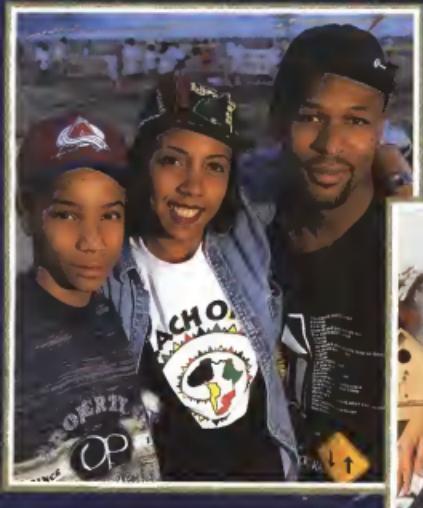
Maclean's

JULY 1, 1996 ON DISPLAY UNTIL JULY 7, 1996

LOCAL HEROES



*Celebrating Canadians
who are making a
difference in their own
communities*



\$3.50



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From The Editor

Making a difference

The contrast is striking. There they were again, the representatives from Official Canada, parading and prating in Ottawa, trying to represent a nation that has turned its collective back on the old politics. Down in the trenches, in Unofficial Canada, the real people, with the real problems, were offering a different vision. Despite record bankruptcies, layoffs, the threat of separation, Unofficial Canada is alive with hope. This summer, more than 100 numbers that have never been so large, people are stepping forward to help their fellow citizens and to do good works in the community. They are conducting collections, offering soup kitchens with groceries for food-insecure families, cooking meals for the homeless, taking care of the handicapped, running hospital boards, building community facilities, establishing self-sustaining enterprises. It is a study in contrasts—the politics of confrontation versus the practice of volunteerism, from one versus five in shorts and skirts.

Typical of the breed is Paul Cormack, a Vancouver engineer, a quadriplegic who volunteered to help a quadriplegic cope with his disability, first by fashioning a door catch from a coat hanger that allowed the man to hold open his levered door. In the nine years since, Cormack has become part of an expanded network of 37 chapters of volunteer engineers and technicians helping the handicapped throughout North America. Another exemplar is Peter Lewellyn, a lead plant manager in Grand Banks, Nfld., who helped found a centre for troubled youth at the town. He and his associates persuaded officials to acquire a long-derelict squad



plant and turned it into the centre to make in Grand Banks.

Cormack and Lewellyn are only two of the scores of people featured in this week's special July 1 report on "Local heroes." They exemplify a growing cast of Canadians in all walks of life, from corporate boardrooms to Indian reserves, who are making a difference in their communities. Cutting across political and ideological lines, people are looking for pragmatic solutions to their problems. And there is a mood in a world ravaged by terrorism and uncertainty, where you still cannot find a job, where family life is threatened, when financial fears have been unmasked, people are trying to pull together for the common good. They long ago stopped looking to government to solve their problems, and continue to be reminded that the elected leaders still act as if they can. And throughout society, there is a rising interest in spirituality and a remarkable level of faith in God, even as attendance at traditional places of worship declines.

The trend is commonly known as the Canadian way, harkening back to the days when our ancestors settled the Promised Kingdom. It also coincides with the end of the era of government largesse. So long as people do not doubt themselves that volunteers and the private sector will ever take up all the slack caused by government cutbacks, the growing ranks of grassroots communities can be a useful reminder of fundamental virtues—it is better to give than to receive, better to get a hand up than a handout.

Robert Lewis



Grand Banks youth intervening a long-derelict squad plant



McDonald, Dowell, Watson

Newsroom Notes:

Cross-country celebration

This week's cover package, a Canada Day celebration of local heroes across the country, represents months of work on the part of Maclean's bureau, writers and photographers. Overseen by Assistant Managing Editor Ann Dowsett Johnson and designed by Associate Art Director Connie Salazar, the 23-page special report focuses on spirited individuals from Baffin Island to the Nass Valley, B.C., to Sydney

N.S.—all making vital contributions to their own communities. As Senior Writer Marc McDonald writes in her opening article, "Thousands of Canadians are stepping forward to act out, in various ways, the kind of advanced citizenship a country like ours calls for." And in fact, each bureau chief, from Vancouver to Halifax, attested to that truth, added to that the lesson from their own region, their contributions were legion. Says Dowsett Johnson, "Bittered by a recession, weary of political rhetoric, Canadians are determined to fix things in their own backyard. The country's future may be in question, but there is a profound belief in potentiality, in the larger rewards of going to those around you."

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TV's impact

It is a good thing to block TV violence. I wish the *Veltip* ("Toxic TV" Cover, June 17). It is a better thing for parents to take the responsibility to provide our children with morals, standards and values. It is fine for parents to find the good stuff and watch it with, or read it to, our kids—they're worth it.

Angela J. Breen,
Burlington, Ont.

There seems to be an aspect of this debate about violence on TV and its effects on children that is not being addressed. Adults are setting the moral and visual standards that our children watch on TV, adults write the scripts, adults sell the ideas, products and programs. Outside the home, the characters will dress and what actions, and interaction with each other, they will exhibit—whether they be violent, rude, aggressive, cruel or racist. The adults who write and produce in the children's entertainment industry must be held more accountable.

Gloria B. Shier,
Toronto

According to your "Toxic TV" cover article, some researchers still claim that what we see and hear on TV does not affect our behaviour. Luckily the adversaries haven't figured that out yet.

Kris Boddy,
Toronto

The *Simpsons* is often cited as an example of what's wrong with television. I would submit that *The Simpsons* is one of the funniest, best-written and perceptive television shows ever created. Perhaps the seven-year-old boy who likes to hear Homer say "D'oh!" will one day grow to appreciate the show's more subtle elements—the wonderfully satiric portraits of Mr. Burns, a ruthless industrialist,

Seamus, his obnoxious sidekick, or Leontine Hata, Springfield's most incompetent attorney.

Sean McElroy,
New York City



Your suggestions that readers either turn off the television or make use of the V-chip to counteract the impact of television on children totally ignore another more positive approach. Researchers tell us that developing reading literacy skills reduces TV's impact on children. The more children think and talk about television, the less influence it has on them. Media literacy—the ability to look critically and think critically—is taught in schools across Canada. By not mentioning it, you not only ignore the work of thousands of Canadian teachers, but also leave parents with little real hope in dealing with the impact of television on children.

John J. Puglisi,
President, Canadian Association of
Media Education Organizations,
Toronto

No popular vote

I would like to comment Maclean's for the fair and balanced coverage of the British Columbia election ("The battle for B.C.," Cover, May 27, and "The B.C. way," Cover, June 10). The treatment of the issues, personalities and situations helped to redress the imbalance of the major B.C. newspapers.

Arnold Rossiter,
Victoria

So Premier Gisela Clark is a "B.C.-buster"? Just that this troubled country needs—another provincial provincial premier? Are there any Canadians among provincial politicians, or is that too much to expect in this me-first era?

Almaire Hensler,
Nepean, Ont.

Your comments on the B.C. election results missed the point. Not only did 41 per cent of the population vote for the Liberals versus 39 per cent for the NDP but fully 60 per cent did not vote for Premier Gisela Clark. Not what I'd call a comfortable ma-

Health and welfare

I was with interest and chagrin that I read your Special Report ("The Health Revolution," June 10). Ontario Premier Mike Harris promoted a Common Sense Revolution in his election campaign, but as far as I can see, his cuts have gone beyond common sense. Certainly, as an April Environics poll pointed out, the government received a great deal of support from men who earn more than \$60,000 per year and who are 55 and older. They are secure. They do not have to worry about supporting a family on minimum wage or reduced welfare payments. As Environics also pointed out, half the population now believes that the cuts are too deep—and they have for their quality of life. Rightly so.

Don M. Scott,
Thunder Bay, Ont.

...ose. Forget the seat coast—a large majority of B.C. voters cast their ballot against the NDP and the no-spending policies Clark has to offer to hasten the results but the fair改革, most of us do not want that, or the NDP.

Michael Captain,
Langley, B.C.

Misinformation

The letter from D. C. McCaffrey in your May 20 issue ("Dealing with refugees") states: "The Canadian refugee determination process has become so chaotic that one in six refugee claimants, according to RCMP figures, is charged with a crime after entering Canada." While this letter was written by a private citizen, I thought it is important to provide clarification on this statement and to state for the record that the RCMP does not substantiate these figures. In fact, no such records are kept by the RCMP.

Darren Henry
Director, Public Affairs and
Information Directorate
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Ottawa

'Damaged reputation'

As you have recently reported, many individuals who appeared before the blood inquiry under Judge Justice Krever have applied to the Federal Court of Canada to set aside portions of alleged misconduct (PCI) that had blood and bone. (Canada, June 20.) As a scientist and physician who worked in the federal health department for more than 35 years, I feel only

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was publicly disclosed in my reputation. It has been severely tarnished by the conduct of the inquiry. My name was included in the list of 17 federal government and 167 Cross officials "who may be named in adverse findings of fact." Although the final report of this inquiry has not yet been published and the evidence of any alleged wrongdoing has not been disclosed, unauthorised doubts have been cast on my professional competence with the result that my international reputation has been greatly damaged. As a proud citizen of this country, I cannot accept any procedure that violates my rights and freedom. Therefore, the time has come for revisions to the federal Inquiries Act to ensure it is effective, efficient, fair and fair.

Dr. John Purser.
Glasgow

'Sound journalism'

Enough already. It is time the anti-Black majority stopped blabbing. Nobody was forced to sell newspaper stories to media magnate Conrad Black. The money markets will determine the financing models and advertisers will determine the health of the local product. Peter J. Neeson was what Black's Black's control of newspaper content through proxy publishing ("Conrad Black's private agenda," *The National Business Review*, March 17, 2001, p. 12). As a third-world of The Canadian Press Vancouver bureau, I organized and press-covered coverage of the tragic PWA passenger jet crash in Cranbrook, B.C., during a week-long in 1987. The product editors of *Black's Daily Townsman*, the local papers, exercised sound journalism by selecting the level of CP's comprehensive coverage for its readers. As for Neeson's gratuitous reference to CP being Townsman's head after then having the cheque to cover the overhead and expenses connected with covering the story—eventually paid by Black's newspapers and other CP outlet partners.

Philip Adlesic
Tampa, Fla.

Maclean's

July 2000 9:00 AM-10:00 AM

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The Road Ahead

Celebrating diversity, uniqueness

As a concerned Canadian, I have given some thought to our current problem of Quebec and Canadian unity, and I am proposing a method of addressing the social aspect that I hope will spark some interest among other Canadians.

I fear the momentum of the Unity Rally is being lost, and that this may lead Canadians to the "too little, too late" comment by the separatists in Quebec. The rally made it clear that the Canadian Dream is still alive, even if it has been obscured. I believe we need to renew the dream by looking back, as a country, on our roots and our history in order to regain an appreciation of what we have today. We need to recognize the changes that have occurred since the country was formed and appreciate the contributions of the founding cultures—First Nations, French and English. We need to focus not on the mistakes of the past, the won't won or lost, but on who we are as a nation now. We need to embrace the reality that we are a bilingual country, and a multicultural one. We need to realize that this

Janene B. Meliquist,
Lynn Bay, B.C.

I am sick and tired of the contempt and prejudice with which Peter C. Newman treats anyone who does not adhere to the basically left-of-centre consensus that has hitherto pervaded the Canadian media establishment. Newman was offended by the notion that Conrad Black might actually seek to bring a more balanced view to the newspapers that he owns. He is evidently growing up while we bring our political and media élites happy. Newman speaks of learned men about "newsmen sayings," but that is a misleading attitude. Whenever I hear him, I am left with a bad taste in my mouth.

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old view. It is praised as innovative and provocative, but if a conservative such as Black attempts to make his voice heard, the media elites start wringing about the fact it supposedly presents to democracy. Black's conservative views are shared by a substantial portion of the Canadian public, but if Black does manage to reflect his views in any of his newspapers, it will be a disaster related from the left-liberal monolith that has rendered most of our media outlets hopelessly out of touch.

Christopher Van-Zandt,
Montgomery, Ont. 3K

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Henning captured the Metro

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MULTI-MEDIA

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Opening Notes

Edited by BARBARA HOGGENS

Helping a Canadian legend to take flight

It was a tall order. The producers of *The Arrow*, a CBC mini-series now being shot in Winnipeg, had a great Canadian story and an established Canadian star, Dan Aykroyd. But in preparing the drama about the development of the Avro Arrow jet fighter, the producers still had to cast the central role—the plane itself. After Ottawa's controversial cancellation of the Arrow in 1958, the last of the jets were chopped up and sold for scrap. Deciding that they would have to build a

Computer crime-solver

Partway through 1995's *Silence of the Lambs*, the FBI investigator played by Jodie Foster remarks that no pattern exists to her quarry's killings—if there were, all says, “the computer would have picked it up.” When the movie was shot, Foster's character was using a computer to analyze patterns of serial killer John Wayne Gacy's murders. After the film's success, the FBI's computer crime lab began to receive calls from people who wanted to know if there was a computer program that could determine patterns in a computer's data about crimes. That has now changed. Thanks to Det. Tom Rossano, a 16-year veteran of the Vancouver police department who also has a PhD in criminology. Building on work undertaken for his doctorate at Simon Fraser University in nearby Burnaby, B.C., Rossano has developed software that aids through thousands of de-



diabolical patterns

tails, such as where a killer is known to have met his victims, contact of the murders and dropped his body. If there products locate familiar to the killer near where he works, or more often near his residence. Tested retroactively, for instance, on the series of serial killer Clifford Olson, the program accurately pinpointed an area around Olson's home in Coquitlam, B.C. Now, Rossano is preparing to unleash his digital Holmes in an off-the-shelf version backed by San Francisco-based Federal Inc. of Mountain View, Calif. Rossano and several B.C. partners have developed a prototype workstation—currently being tested by Vancouver police—and begun selling it to potential customers. One sales prospect, the sizable FBI unit in which Foster's rather presidential character was employed in *Silence of the Lambs*.

The way the ball bounces

When Canadian tennis player Greg Rusedski aged last year to play under a British passport (his mother is British), he amazed many Canadian fans who had hoped that the six-foot, three-inch left-hander could be a top 20 player for Canada. Still, the Montreal native had his reasons: he stepped in as Britain's top player, which meant there was potential for hefty endorsement money. The world's 47th-ranked player in May, 1995, when he made the swap, is now for Wimbledon, he rose gradually to a career high of 33 in January. But since then, Rusedski has tailed off, so that as Wimbledon opens this week, he is the number 2 British player, behind Davis Cup teammate Tim Henman. His rankings have trading in the Maple Leaf for the Union Jack.



Arrow model. Alas Jackson, 26, is determined to resurrect the two-car garage

The perks of power

The Lancer Club has been around for years, quietly collecting money from the Liberal elite and corporate honchos who want to stay in good form with the natural government party. For \$1,000 a year, club members enjoy such benefits as briefings from cabinet ministers and a chance to rub shoulders with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. In "social" situations, let alone weeks, the club has kicked into high gear. On June 13, Oxon Corp. chairman and monarch Liberal Gerry Schwartz and his wife, Heather, welcomed Chrétien and his wife, Alice—and about 300 club members—to their Toronto home. Then, last week in Ottawa, the Chrétiens personally greeted about 1,000 guests at their official 24 Sussex Drive residence. More such events are planned for the Vancouver, Calgary and Whistler. Not that they will be publicized. The Prime Minister's Office, which usually issues a news release whenever the Prime Minister attends events, made no mention. For instance, of last week's bash, Bla: what the heck is the reason behind the Lancer Club's annual flurry of events? Suggests one Ottawa insider: "The Liberals are building a war chest for an early election."



Arrow model. Alas Jackson, 26, is determined to resurrect the two-car garage

Diving in to teach islanders to swim

Despite the warm water and alluring islands, 75 per cent of the 250,000 residents of St. Lucia in the eastern Caribbean cannot swim a stroke. Because of that, in the shadow of 12 Abbotsford, B.C., teenagers are going to St. Lucia this week for two weeks to teach safety and swimming skills to island youth. The Canadian team belongs to the St. Lucians Youth Life Saving Club, a member of the Royal Life Saving Society, a Commonwealth association. When St. Lucians coach Kendall De Merech wrote a letter to a now-defunct club as the island welcomed them to the association, the St. Lucians responded with a request for assistance in launching their high-stressing program. The St. Lucians raised the travel money themselves by holding bake sales and selling cheerleader hats. Says De Merech: "It does not matter where the help comes from—so long as it is good."

BEST-SELLERS

FICTION

1. *The Remains of the Day*, John le Carré (U)
2. *Crimes of the Heart*, Robert Olen Butler (U)
3. *Acceptance*, Dennis Lehane (U)
4. *The Goldfinch*, Donna Tartt (U)
5. *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, John Fowles (U)
6. *White Heat*, John D'Agata (U)
7. *Midnight in the Garden*, Heather Gudenkauf (U)
8. *One True Thing*, Anne Rivers Siddons (U)
9. *Anybody*, Christopher Moore (U)
10. *Wineglass*, Peter Mayle (U)

NONFICTION

1. *Steve, Short & Sacks*, David Post (U)
2. *Best Cities Ever*, Jim Wong (U)
3. *How to Make a Million*, Steve Greenbaum (U)
4. *Not in My House*, Steve Greenbaum (U)
5. *Miller's Writings*, Elizabeth Miller (U)
6. *Scientific Intelligencer*, David Goldwein (U)
7. *On Conquest*, Christopher Lasch (U)
8. *How to Make a Million*, Steve Greenbaum (U)
9. *The Good Life*, Melville Stone (U)

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Multicultural writings

NONFICTION *Alas Jackson's *Arrow* (left)* reflects Canada in all its ethnic complexity. *Editor Steven Novakowski*, an English professor at the University of Victoria, brings together 71 authors, including native Canadians and writers of Turkish, Tanzanian and Indian descent.

Passages

CHARGED: So-called Unclebeater Theodore J. Kuczyński, 54, with slender, trim build, is going to Sacramento, Calif. in the first charges related to an 18-year string of bombings across the United States. The jury just indicted Kuczyński, a brilliant but reclusive former mathematics professor, for the deaths of Sacramento readers Hugh Scrutton, a computer store owner, in 1983 and timber lobbyist Gabor Maranyi in 1985. Meanwhile, authorities say that they were up investigating links between Kuczyński, who has been in a Montana jail since his April 3 arrest for possessing some inciting materials, to the other Unclebeater number victim, New Jersey advertising executive Thomas Morris.

CONVICTED: Bruce O'Neill, author of *A Message*, died Monday about 10:30 a.m. in his home in Bremerton, Wash. Seattle Star reporter Nick Proh in Tacoma, O'Neill accused Proh, author of *Leftist Message*—another book about the Bremerton trial—of plagiarizing and test December issue sparked telephone threats after the reporter refused to let O'Neill's death be for a \$3,000 payout.

HOSPITALIZED: Former Quebec premier Robert Bourassa, 62, for treatment of malignant melanoma, in Montreal. Bourassa, who left politics in 1994, has been struck by skin cancer three times since 1990.

POP MOVIES

A beauty's impact

MOVIES *Alas Jackson's *Arrow* (left)* reflects Canada in all its ethnic complexity. *Editor Steven Novakowski*, an English professor at the University of Victoria, brings together 71 authors, including native Canadians and writers of Turkish, Tanzanian and Indian descent.

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AWARDED: To Freckle Hayes, 66, the Toronto-based sports scientist who created the Special Olympics for disabled athletes in the late 1970s, the \$125,000 Royal Bank Award for significant contribution to human welfare.

HONOR: The legendary voice of the New York Yankees, baseball broadcaster Mel Allen, 83, who for 17 years hosted the syndicated TV show *This Week in Baseball*, in Greenwich, Conn.



Citizenship on sale

Investigating Ottawa's immigrant investor plan

BY SHAR LEVINE
and ANDREW PHILLIPS

The image is striking, but not completely revealing: Prime Minister Jean Chrétien strides out from the pages of a Taiwanese-Canadian newspaper and slaps the head of Gordon Fu, the president of a high-profile company that specializes in arranging visas from Taiwan to Canada. What the photograph does not show is that during the private meeting in the Prime Minister's Office in Ottawa on Feb. 28, Fu took the highly unusual step of personally handing Chrétien a letter asking that the Prime Minister speed up his application for permanent residency in Canada. Fu was angry that although he heads the biggest consulting company in what has become the hottest Asian market for Canadian business immigration, his own application had been stalled by federal officials. "I have brought in over \$225 million of business to this country," he complained later in an interview with Maclean's. "Why shouldn't they let me in? Why should I have to wait so long?"

One reason for the wait became evident on June 14 when the RCMP filed criminal charges against Fu and his brother Robert, who heads the Canadian arm of the family business, Imperial Consultants Ltd. The charges, laid in Ontario provincial court in Ottawa, allege that the Fu brothers attempted to bribe two senior officials of the federal immigration department, John Martin and Michael Bradley Martin, director of

Ottawa's business immigration division, and Bradley, a senior investment analyst with the immigration department, were in a position to influence a decision affecting lucrative investment funds controlled by Robert and Gordon Fu. According to police sources, the charges involve allegations that the Fu brothers offered each official \$50,000 to change a department ruling that suspended several of their funds. Last week, Robert Fu was arrested on the charges in Vancouver, and a warrant was issued for the arrest of Gordon Fu, who is based in the Taiwanese capital, Taipei. The charges against the two men are only part of a wider investigation; even before the bribery charges were laid, Imperial Consultants was the target of a wide-ranging RCMP inquiry. And police officials have told Maclean's that the RCMP and immigration officials are now co-operating in an investigation of the Fu's extensive business operations.

That in turn, raises wider questions about Ottawa's immigrant investor fund, launched 14 years ago as a fast track for wealthy newcomers to Canada. Federal officials say the program has brought just over \$31 billion and at least 45,000 people into Canada since a begins in 1986. The idea is that the money would be made available as risk capital for Canadian companies, creating thousands of new jobs. But according to immigration lawyers and even some government officials, the system is being widely abused—and the greatest area of abuse now is Taiwan. In effect, say the critics, Canada has given up control of a major aspect of its immigration policy to foreign

The drama of Taipei's interior



Robert Fu and Gordon Fu in the Prime Minister's office, Imperial's Vancouver office. "Why shouldn't they let me in?"

agents-based consultants, many of whom use unscrupulous methods including fabrication of documents to qualify their clients for Canadian visas. And, the critics add, the benefits that Canadians have been led to expect from these healthy investments may not be matched by the reality. Although the regulations require them to invest a minimum of \$250,000 or \$350,000, depending on the province, for five years to obtain residency in Canada, that money often does not come into the country.

Instead, the agents and managers end up often as elaborate shell groups so that their clients qualify by putting up only a fraction of the cash required. And even that money, say other sources familiar with ongoing investigations into some investor funds, sometimes remains in overseas accounts.

The result, say the system's many critics, is that Canadian residency, and eventually citizenship, is for sale at bargain prices. "The investor immigration program has always stunk," said an immigration department official with extensive experience in Asia who said that his name not be used. "And in Taiwan, it stinks higher than anywhere else. There is massive fraud."

Canadian officials familiar with the trade say that many consultants operating in Taiwan have become so sophisticated in preparing their clients' applications that they—not Canadian immigration officials—effectively control who can get into this country through the investor immigrant and entrepreneur immigrant programs. "There isn't staff to check all the applications," says the immigration official. "It's mostly a paper transaction between lawyer and consultant. It's a Taiwanese Yip-ho, a chanda, and the taxpayer's interest is not being served."

Taiwan is the focus of the latest concern for several reasons. The country's booming economy has produced many millionaires—rich and able—to buy sanctuary in a stable country like Canada. Recent tensions with the Communist People's Republic of China produced new interest from Taiwanese who face political trouble down the road. Unlike Hong Kong, where most business people speak English and are relatively familiar with Canada, Mandarin-speaking Taiwanese tend to be easier targets for consultants who promise to settle them properly in a strange new land. And Canada's

lack of formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan makes it more difficult for Canadian immigration officials to investigate questionable behavior there.

The charges against Robert and Gordon Fu involve only the alleged bribery—not any other practice. The Fu brothers are major players in the 10-year-old immigrant investor program, which attracted \$605 million and 2,000 investors to this country last year alone. With offices in Taiwan and Hong Kong as well as Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Boston, Mass., Imperial Consultants alone has brought some 3,000 Taiwanese families to Canada since it was founded in 1987. It advertises a full range of services, charging consulting fees averaging \$12,000 per application, and signing up many of its clients for the services of its related travel agency, real estate company and auto brokerage. Most, however, though, are commissions from the tens of millions of dollars of client money invested in a dozen private investment funds controlled by Robert and Gordon Fu. At the time of the February raiding in Chrétien's office, the brothers were insisting that the government was about to bring in new regulations drastically limiting the eligibility of privately administered investment funds to obtain Canadian residency. Those new rules, which are to take effect on June 30, 2002, were prompted by several high-profile cases involving massive and even fraudulent funds. After June 30, private firms will no longer be allowed to set up new investment funds for business immigration, or accept new money for existing funds. Prospective immigrants will have to direct their money to government-sponsored funds instead.

Those restrictions have alarmed the source of consultants in Taiwan who earn fat fees by helping Taiwanese investors the minimum needed for residency in Canada. In so doing in a Taiwanese newspaper, one prominent firm specializing in immigration to Canada, called GIC Confidentiality, warned potential clients: "Canadian immigration is entering a dark zone. Restrictive policies will exclude a greater number of immigrants as refund rates increase dramatically." The 150-member Taiwan Immigration Consultants Association in Taipei recently sent a letter of protest to Canada's Commissioner in Hong Kong, which handles immigration applications from Taiwan. "Most of our members promote Canada as the number 1 choice for immigration, but it seems the Canadian government has become tougher," says One Too, the association's chairman. "They're making it very tough for us."

Publicly, however, officials of the Canadian trade office in Taipei maintain that it is "business as usual" for investment to Canada. And in Ottawa, immigration officials defend the program as a way to bring money to Canada and create jobs. Departmental spokesman John Oliver and the new rules restricting private funds are aimed at dealing with the main problem with the program—including the fact that some investors bring only part of the required money into Canada. "It's something the department believes in," he said. "It's just a matter of redesigning it so it attracts real capital that goes to small and medium-sized business." According to department figures, the immigrant investor program has created 25,245 jobs since 1986.

Still, the program is evidently a sensitive subject for Ottawa. When Maclean's began making inquiries into the program and the activities of immigration consultants in early March, that prompted a flurry of concern, including a confidential faxed message from Ivor Ross Morrison, executive assistant to George Tait, an assistant deputy minister of immigration. Morrison's message warned several department officials about the inquiries and asked for silence on what "steps we should take for damage control."

The story of Imperial Consultants was soon after Ottawa launched the investor immigration program a decade ago. At that time, the Fu brothers were involved in their

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family's business in Taiwan, selling chemicals. They soon switched to selling Canada, and Robert Fu moved to Vancouver to open a Canadian operation that now employs about 80 people (in addition to 300 staff in Taiwan). Their brothers, Tim, and the wives of all three men are also involved in what has become the biggest company in the booming Taiwan-Canada management business.

Given Fu's entry to the Prime Minister's Office came through Montreal-based Lévesque-Boulin Gestion, one of the largest Quebec-based investment firms dealing with business immigration. Until recently, Imperial was the exclusive agent in Taiwan for a Quebec fund managed by Lévesque-Boulin. Louis Labrèche, vice-president and director of the company, was responsible for setting up the February meeting at which Fu presented his personal appeal to the Prime Minister. A spokesperson for Chretien said last week that the meeting involved potential investors in a hotel in the Prime Minister's Quebec riding, and that any letter given to him would have been passed on through "normal channels." Fu told MacLean's that when he met the Prime Minister, former Finance Minister Conservative minister Gerry Weir, Weir was "very angry" that his own application for permanent residency in Canada had been delayed for 18 months. "That's a very bad treatment for me," he said. Later, however, Fu said he acknowledged that it was inappropriate for him to ask the Prime Minister to intervene in his case. "That is a mistake," he said, adding that "cultural differences" between Canada and Taiwan accounted for his gesture.

Imperial Canada also attempted to enlist the aid of another man with political connections to the immigration department. former Conservative minister Gerry Weir, Weir, minister of state for Immigration from 1986 to 1988, wanted Imperial's advice in Taiwan and accepted a two-day visit and trip from MacLean's to Vancouver in February to meet the Chinese New Year as a guest of Imperial. Weir also published an article in the *China Daily* about the Chinese New Year, in which he said that the PRC had made "a number of efforts" to him, but he did not accept any of them. "I do not have any relatives or employment with Imperial Canada," he added.

Imperial was dealing with Lévesque-Boulin for another reason than its critics of the unwise immigrant program. As part of its independent immigration policy, Quebec runs its own immigrant admissions, separate from that administered by Ottawa and covering all the other provinces. By requiring that all immigrant investments be made through a registered broker and licensed by a Quebec corporation, the province gives business immigrants a high degree of security. There is no requirement, however, that immigrants who take advantage of the Quebec program's favorable terms actually settle there—and few do. Instead, they qualify for Canadian residency but usually go to Toronto or Vancouver, home to Canada's biggest Taiwanese community (about 60,000 people).

That practice is commonly known in the immigration community as "transplanting"—hiring an unscrupulous broker immediately to another. As a result, Quebec gets the financial benefits of immigrant investment (some \$1 billion in the past decade), while other provinces, mostly British Columbia, end up with the cost of resettling the immigrants' children, medical benefits, and the social expenses that come from the arrival of many newcomers from different cultures. "The money goes to Quebec but all the bodies come in British Columbia—so it's a double whammy for British Columbia," says a disgruntled provincial trade official based in Asia, who also asked for anonymity. "But you can't blame the immigrants. The system allows them to do it, so why not?"

Managers of private funds set up for immigrant investors fear that Ottawa's new regulations will cut off their main source of income. They predict that even more new investment will now go to

Quebec (which now gets fully half of all such money coming into Canada), because it is not covered by the federal rules. As a result, it will be the only province able to produce new private investment funds, while only government-sponsored funds will be able to operate in the rest of the country. Private fund managers outside Quebec say that is an unfair advantage, since they will no longer be allowed to create new funds, market to overseas investors or manage their investments in Canada.

Most of the private funds that Imperial sells are based in provinces that require a minimum investment of just \$250,000 (only British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec funds require at least \$350,000). They are also higher-risk. Both Gordon and Robert Fu point out that Imperial Consultants does not actually own the private funds they are owned or managed by the PAs or members of their families. The Fu brothers have even installed their elderly mother, Kuang-Ling Chia, as manager of several funds. Their funds include Atlantic Capital Corp., Atlantic Prudential Fund, Atlantic Growth Fund Corp., P&I Growth Fund Corp., Mount Royal



André Aspinwall's office. Policy
to worth a family-run business

Capital Corp., AB Diversified Fund Corp., KLC Capital Corp., NS Growth Fund Corp., NS Growth Fund Corp., and AB Capital Corp. Trust. They represent investments of more than \$250 million.

Given the program's proposed several ways to correct its major flaws, one suggestion made by these economists above amounts to "transplanting" from Quebec to other provinces is that investors be required to reside in the province where they place their money in a period of three years. That would affect 85 per cent of those who have invested through the Quebec plan and then gone on to reside in other provinces. New immigrants, knowing there is a residency requirement, would be free to choose to live in Quebec or to move to the province where they intend to stay. Says Richard Kirshen, a Montreal immigration lawyer and adviser to the Quebec immigration department, "That would further the moral standard that immigrant investors risk when they declare that the intended province of destination is Quebec."

Other critics maintain that rules governing who can act as an immigration consultant should be tightened. The federal immigration department recently endorsed that idea, saying it is prepared to consider licensing consultants as part of a strategy aimed at protecting the public against abuse. At present, many Canadian-based consultants regulate their own activities. The Toronto-based Organization of Professional Immigration Consultants regulates its 200 members to follow rules of professional behavior and a code of ethics. However, says spokesman Paul Billings, Ottawa has unilaterally attempted to police the business by allowing unregulated overseas consultants to deal with immigration officials. "Not only the industry, but the country as a whole, is being given a black eye by these unscrupulous consultants and immigration lawyers," says Billings. "We are a bit frustrated."

Still other critics, even within the immigration department, isn't to banish a view. "They should eliminate the whole damn process," one official said bluntly. "It's a lie." With tens of millions of dollars at stake, however, that is where Ottawa is unlikely to follow.

Managers of private funds set up for immigrant investors fear that Ottawa's new regulations will cut off their main source of income. They predict that even more new investment will now go to

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Mission accomplished



Chrétien, Clark, Martin and Boisclair: a four-way discussion on the amending formula

BY ANTHONY WILSON-SMITH

In the most exclusive political club in Canada, membership has its privileges—and a curious but consistent code of behavior. Whenever the country's First Ministers get together, as they did last week in Ottawa, the premiers invariably complain about perceived aggression inflicted by the federal government. Then, at the end, the prime minister stoutly declares that while an agreement was reached on nothing substantive, everyone was heartened by the discussions.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the conclusion of a day and a half of talks between Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, the 10 premiers and two territorial leaders. This time, the leaders achieved full or partial agreement on several significant issues. Along with the usual divisive issues, including the Constitution and regional disputes,

and a notable fit of pique by Bradish Colan's no-nonsense premier, Glen Clark, they managed to achieve consensus on the creation of a national securities commission that will involve eight provinces. New agreements were also reached on pan-Canadian environmental controls, as well as shifting more control over manpower training, for estates and mining to the provinces. And in the spirit of co-operation, most of the premiers, including apparently Quebec's Lucien Bouchard, will join Chrétien on a third Team Canada Asian business mission—this time to the Philippines, South Korea

and Thailand—next January. Declared Chrétien: "The premiers told me they had never come to a meeting before where they discussed so many different subjects in such a short time."

As a result, a meeting that federal officials deliberately sought in advance to downplay ended with an unusual degree of accomplishment and no small amount of controversy. The biggest issue of contention was the creation of a national securities commission. While Quebec and British Columbia refused to join in, it is likely to delight investors and practitioners in the field by ending duplication and simplifying the operations of the often complex and costly business of regulating publicly traded companies. But one of the problems for the provinces joining the national program, in turn, is that they will lose revenue from current fees charged by provincial commissions. And, predicted Chrétien, the new Canadian commission, which will almost certainly be based in Toronto, will be so big that it will sweep the two remaining provincial commissions under the rug. (Quebec will still be allowed to regulate its own market, while British Columbia will create "some kind of chaos.")

Meanwhile, in keeping with what Chrétien calls his "little-by-little" approach to reforming federalism, the Prime Minister announced that Ottawa will gradually enact it self already entirely from such fields as forestry and mining, where it previously shared jurisdiction with the provinces. Still, many of the premiers are unhappy with the fact that the transfer of power will not be accompanied by a transfer of money or tax points. Instead, the provinces will be expected to pay for the new services they offer from their existing revenues.

The meeting also avoided substantial progress on the highly controversial issue of social programs. Most provinces have fully protested the fact that Ottawa has cut its cash contributions to provincial health and welfare programs but still sets strict standards for that spending. Last week, Chrétien finally agreed that the federal government will work with the provinces to

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finds ways to set those standards together. As well, Ontario Premier Mike Harris won general support for his insistence that, when the provinces take over transportation money, most be allocated on the basis of each province's number of unemployed. That means that Ontario, with 35 per cent of unemployed Canadians, will likely get 35 per cent of the estimated \$8-billion training fund. "In that area, there is no room for debate," warned Harris.

But differences still marked much of the meeting. Outside of the department of foreign affairs building, where Friday's meetings took place, native leaders demonstrated against their exclusion from the conference. University of B.C. Native traditional chief Ovide Mercredi pledged a renewed push for native sovereignty "in order to get attention in this country." Inside, the leaders conducted business as usual—which means they found no shortage of things to express disappointment. During the talks, the range and depth of complaints clearly showed that, as well as getting angry at Ottawa, the premiers are also quite capable of being annoyed with each other. Alberta's Ralph Klein, Ontario's Harris, and British Columbia's Clark, for example, complained about Ottawa's decision to give \$1 billion to three Atlantic provinces to compensate them for the harmonization of their sales taxes with the federal Goods and Services Tax. Atlantic premiers, in turn, complained about those complaints.

But Clark, if anything, eclipsed his fellow premiers with the volume and vehemence of his complaints about Ottawa. The cause of his anger, along with some anger from the other premiers, was Ottawa's refusal to hand over jurisdiction over fisheries in the wake of vastly depleted salmon stocks off the Pacific coast. Clark called the meeting "a big waste of time," denounced the federal government's "irrational" and "unconscious" and suggested that British Columbia will have to fall back on "a more transactional way" although he did not specify what he meant. As well, at one point during the Thursday night dinner of nachos, lamb and turp at 24 Sussex Drive, he boasted strongly that he would boycott the next Team Canada trip. But he was roundly upbraided by several other premiers. Ontario's Harris suggested that perhaps Clark "was still in an election mode," while Newfoundland's Brian Topp said much the same thing. New Brunswick's Frank McKenna told Clark that the trade ministers represented important contributions

to national unity. And the B.C. premier's public remarks annoyed other leaders, several of whom suggested that he was posturing. Said Chrétien: "He was not like that inside the room. He was very nice."

All that came to pass in the wake of determined efforts by several leaders to ensure that the meeting would not be characterized by class and disagreement. Chrétien, after initially annoyed, and stunned, most of the premiers when he lectured them before the meeting on the importance of not appearing too confrontive in public. Such behavior, he said, would only play into the hands of Quebec sovereigntists looking for proof that federation is inflexible and unworkable. Bouchard, needless to say,



From left: Klein, Clark and Harris, packaging for further limited constitutional changes

The B.C. premier eclipsed Bouchard in his complaints about Ottawa



McKenna taking self-movie protestant: linking Clark's 'step-by-step' approach to Newfoundland

was not privy to that lecture). As a result, the two premiers told Mercredi that during the dinner at Clark's residence, many of them were "swelling up eggsheads."

But at the same time, during a meeting that all sides insisted would concentrate almost exclusively on constitutional issues, the leaders still found time to talk—and argue—about a number of seemingly unrelated issues. Not surprisingly, the Con-

sideration was foremost among them. The Prime Minister put the topic on the agenda, in order to fulfill a constitutional requirement that obliges Ottawa and the provinces to discuss the amending formula by April 1997. Chrétien had also hoped, at one point, to placate Quebecers by discussing possible ways to give the province constitutional recognition as a distinct society, as well as a seat over future constitu-

tional changes affecting their province. But those efforts were resisted by, among others, Bouchard, who insisted before the conference that any such talk be tabled—and did his best to ensure that outcome by promising to speak at the first topic was raised. When Bouchard kept his word, Chrétien, Harris and Clark had both initially suggested that the federal government announced its position to nothing more than a pre-election play. As well, the plan

was delayed because the premiers could not agree over how the money should be spent—it should be raised, Klein and Newfoundland's Gary Priceau wanted the money used to repair highways, while Bouchard pushed for more investment in research and development programs. In the end, the premiers agreed to further study. If the plan proceeds, individual provinces will likely be allowed greater flexibility in

spending. In addition, the private sector may be asked to replace cash-strapped transit agencies.

As interesting as the meeting itself was the packaging for position that took place between the provinces and Ottawa. Quebec brought a massive delegation of 23 officials to the meeting. Ontario, by contrast, brought five. Similarly, Quebec officials meticulously planned for the meeting weeks in advance, taking into account everything from potential alliances with other provinces on specific issues to the number of representatives they would be allowed in the room. And they lobbed, unsuccessfully, to have federal officials move a curtain that blocked a view of the meeting room—in order to allow journalists to see Bouchard leaving, as promised, when the Constitution was discussed. Ontario, for its part, left a determined but deliberate, more low-key effort to have Ottawa change the manner in which employment Insurance funds are distributed among provinces (as present, Ontario receives only half as much in unemployment insurance benefits—about \$4 billion—as its tax peers contribute). For all that, and despite their disputes with British Columbia and Quebec, federal officials claimed to be satisfied and relieved at the outcome. "We got a lot done," Chrétien insisted. "No one should be surprised that we disagree—at a minimum, that is what happens." By that definition, the democratic tradition is alive and well in Canada—and will likely be so for generations to come.

By MARY JANGIANI and R. KATE FULTON
in Ottawa

PENSION CRUNCH FOR THE BOOMERS

For 30 years, since its birth in the bimonthly 1960s, the Canada Pension Plan has operated on a captive pay-as-you-go principle. Today's workers pick up the tab for today's elderly and disabled recipients. But as the nation's federal and provincial finance ministers reluctantly acknowledged after a day-long meeting in Fredericton last week, that formula has to change. Today's seniors have contributed much less to the CPP than their benefits are worth—because their deductibles simply covered the tab for the small cohort of elderly who initially collected benefits. Worse, the system was not designed to deal with the large population bulge of the baby boomers. When those boomers retire, their entitled, and perhaps rebellious, children will be saddled with contribution rates that will be almost triple the current CPP deduction from payable earnings. "The serious issue is, will future generations be willing to pay a lot more for the same benefits?" says Ian Ball, president of the Canadian Institute of Social Policy, a public policy think tank. "If governments change the contribution rate now, the baby boomers will help to pay for their own pensions."

To ease the burden on future generations, that is precisely what the besieged finance ministers have opted to do—although the details of their CPP overhaul will not be concluded until this fall. Their deliberations are of vital importance to many Canadians: just over 2.3 million people will collect CPP retirement benefits of \$1.1 billion. Senior federal advisers told Maclean's that the finance min-

isters are unlikely to tamper with the benefits of current recipients—the maximum monthly pension at age 65 is \$727.08—or with the provision that provides full inflation for inflation-linked, the ministers will likely increase the CPP deduction from 5.6 per cent of pensionable earnings to approximately 10 per cent over the next six to eight years (employers and employees split the contribution, which currently applies to earnings between \$3,500 and the CPP's ceiling of \$37,400, with the maximum contribution now at \$1,786 per year). They are also likely to begin extracting contributions from currently exempt income by freezing or even reducing the lower limit of \$3,500, which is now indexed for—and thereby protected from—inflation. And the ministers will toughen eligibility criteria for disabled claimants, weeding out applicants who claim benefits on the basis of such ailments as environmentally caused illnesses. While cuts to benefits of future recipients are on the horizon, they are likely to be small—less than one per cent.

Whatever the ministers do, it is likely to be controversial. Any increase in CPP contributions, for one, means less money in taxpayers' pockets. Worse, it adds to an employee's cost for each employee. Some provincial finance ministers, such as Ontario's Eric Eves, have urged Ottawa to cut its employment insurance premiums to compensate for the additional CPP charges. "Ten per cent of pensionable earnings is going to be devastating," warned Garth Whyte, national affairs vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. As the ministers argue the fine print, such bleak warnings are simply the first shots in the battle ahead.

MARY JANGIANI

Kotkin on the left, Lebed on the right, both supporting Yeltsin and other tools of democracy

A Kremlin 'coup'

Tall of civil war. Reports of troop movements. High-level discussions. Charges of a attempted coup in the Kremlin. That was Moscow last week—when everything was supposed to be as smooth as the planned exercise of choosing a new president. To the surprise of Boris Yeltsin, who won the first round of the presidential election, finishing ahead of Communist rival Gennady Zyuganov by three percentage points—35 to 32—in a 10-day-long race. And the two will now go head-to-head in a runoff scheduled for July 3. But Yeltsin's landslide triumph was quickly overshadowed by a struggle for power and influence among his closest advisers that ended in an old-fashioned grift. Apart from everything else, the disparity at the highest levels of government now exposes the shallow roots of democracy in Russia.

The unexpected drama began with the surprise arrival of Alexander Lebed, a widely popular former general who finished third, at 12 per cent, in the June 18 balloting. In a bold bid to strengthen his advantage over the Communists, Yeltsin persuaded the 50-year-old ex-pilot to join his government as a national security czar. "I'm ready to start democracy," Lebed responded, and listed his priorities as "establishing a confined order in the country, reforming the armed services and cracking crime." Not one thought Lebed's new broom would start work so soon and so close to the centre of authority. For his opening act the grizzled-leaved former boxer got Yeltsin to the Popular De-

fense Minister Pavel Grachev, Lebed's longtime rival. The general followed that up by meeting with a liberal faction of Yeltsin's ministers and suggesting a sudden dissolution of that powerful Kremlin triumvirate. According to Yeltsin's aide and press spokesman Anatoly Chubais, Lebed had overruled a palace coup by advisers who wanted to cancel the second round of elections and keep Yeltsin in power as a figurehead. Ending the surprise as a victory for democracy, Chubais declared, "Lebed's appointment is the last and as the collar of confirmation. And the diehards burned like stars that a military coup is possible in Russia."

The move was also political masterstroke that seemed to signal a remarkable new partnership in Russia. Earlier, Yeltsin had welcomed Lebed to the Kremlin by announcing that he regarded the general as his likely successor. The dynamics of the two men have been intertwined since a failed coup in Moscow in August, 1991. As the commander of an elite airborne division, Lebed provided Yeltsin with the military muscle he needed to rally Russians against hardline Communists. In Moldova the following year, Lebed became a Russian nationalist hero by intervening in a bloody civil war between Slav separatists and ethnic Moldovans. He sided with the Slavs and imposed a shabby but lasting peace in the region. Since then, the 62-year-old Yeltsin has indelibly colored his criticism from a man who could be a younger version of himself—a burly, bare-voiced populist with a habit of defying authority.

Last week, Lebed again threw in his lot with Yeltsin—and quickly consolidated a position as one of the most powerful men in Russia. He first recruited marching officers of posts in a Bulgarian administration. Lebed, "I was losing my steam—an old one—that has shed lots of blood and the new one, which is being implemented very hard at the moment but has a future. I chose the new one." After that fiasco in Yeltsin's re-election hopes, the new security czar tacitly raised his outspoken criticism of NATO's expansion plans in eastern Europe, which he had once and could lead to a "Third World War." Now, he said, NATO was welcome to expand, since "we will announce to the whole world that we are not fighting anyone any more."

Lebed then set about ensuring the loyalty of the army—in semi-formal fashion. On June 18, he accused five generals of plotting a coup to keep Grachev in office. When Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin bluntly described the coup reports as nonsense, Lebed noted down his remarks. According to his revised version, the generals had put Grachev on alert at an attempt to pressure Yeltsin into retaining the dismissed defense minister. "I believe that they will now have to resign," he said. Convinced that Western military at-tack in Moscow, "There was no way out. This was just Lebed's way of neutralizing Grachev's influence. Crude but effective."

That was only the start of Lebed's housecleaning in an intrigu-

ing parenthesis who headed Russia's controversial privatization program. The men who held those opposite viewpoints coexisted uneasily in the inner circle, yet worked together only by their shared loyalty to Yeltsin. The bustup was reached at 5 p.m. on June 18, when Karashov ordered the arrest of two campaign aides from the reformer camp on suspicion of stealing nearly \$700,000. When he learned about the incident that evening, Chubais said, he immediately contacted Lebed and asked him to take control of the security service's communications, neutralizing Karashov.

During the course of the sleepless night, the economist and the former paratrooper worked the phones—calling Chernomyrdin among others—and managed to gain the release of the two detained aides. Then, they approached Yeltsin and outlined a startling plot: Karashov had ordered the arrests as the first stage of a plan to disrupt the elections. Surprisingly enough, Yeltsin accepted Chubais's version of events and promptly freed his aides for executing their authority. That kind of sly, dramatic act is a Yeltsin trademark; when circumstances warrant a change, he ruthlessly discards aides as casually as other men change shirts. Chubais himself has faced the expense of the Yeltsin coup. When pro-government candidates fared badly in December's parliamentary elections, Yeltsin blamed it on discontent with privatization, sidelined Chubais and dumped him from the cabinet.

Now, in a move that seems designed to win back reformers who deserted him over such hardline policies as the war in Chechnya, Yeltsin has swung back to the liberals. But while Chubais did his best to portray the Kremlin showdown as a win for reform, Yeltsin's opponent in the runoff painted an administration in total disarray. "Wanted: Zyuganov." This time may still be aimed at disrupting the second round.

To Zyuganov's chagrin, however, most of the first-round election began shifting support to Yeltsin. Svetlana Frolova, a wealthy eye surgeon who gained less than one per cent personally endorsed the president. Fourth-place finisher Grigory Yavlinsky, a strong reformer who managed

Yeltsin purges the hardliners in a new election alliance



Security over Lebed: Communist Zyuganov (right) was shocked the new draw would start work so soon and so close to the centre of power



ASSOCIATED PRESS

seven per cent, asked his supporters not to back Communists. Unconvinced, Yavlinsky, who came in at 10 per cent and fifth place, 5.7 per cent, and his followers would not support Zyuganov under any circumstances. "They are my friends and they will vote the way I tell them," he added in characteristic style. Keeping tabs was Yeltsin's old rival Mikhail Gorbachev, who was less than half a per cent. In any case, complained Zyuganov, "an electorate cannot be intimidated like that." But his solution did not sound like the proposal of a man confident of victory he called for during a recent speech.

The triumphant reformers had a clear idea. During the course of a few tense hours, they offered an unopposed cleat and showed off Lebed as a man more than ready to meet any challenge to his authority. This event was as important as the August, 1991, coup or Yeltsin's clash with parliament in October, 1993," said Andrei Piontovskiy, a political analyst at the independent Centre for Strategic Studies in Moscow. With pride for their victory flowing from a wide spectrum of democrats and nationalists, the unlikely duo of Chubais and Lebed are confident that they have engineered another win at the polls for Boris Yeltsin. □



ON ASSIGNMENT
MALCOLM GUY
IN MOSCOW

And now, 'Filegate'

Bill and Hillary Clinton are heading out of town. They will get away for a while from a side of troubles over ethics that threatens his Democratic presidency. With Washington in uproar over past and recent precedents—or worse—the Clintons are off to France for this week's Group of Seven summit. The First Lady, the target of dark denunciations last week by Senate Republicans, then takes an 11-city tour of Eastern Europe while the President remains home. Meanwhile, the Clintons may spare a sympathetic thought for Alfonso D'Amato, the quarreling Republican from New York who led an exhaustive Senate investigation of the Clintons, mainly Hillary, their old Arkansas friends and present White House aides. When D'Amato issued his final report, off to new state but thunderously the exposure that a Clinton aide once pulled FBI files on federal officials, some of them Republicans.

There was an earlier upstage before his inquiry closed. D'Amato faced reiterations of special treatment from a brokerage, which stood to gain from his influence, in a 1990 stocks deal that netted him \$50,000 in hours. Critics set forth D'Amato's blustering excuse of Hillary Clinton's commando-style market selling of \$200,000 in 1978 and 1979, with an Arkansas trader's help, while her husband was the state's governor.

Now the right Democratic 18-member special Watergate committee issued a scathing report that dramatically supports his legalistic majority's findings. The inquiry ends with an examination, mainly for years—from the Clinton campaign's involvement in the Whitewater real estate venture, and Hillary's work on other Arkansas property deals to charges that the First Lady may have concealed records in the White House on those and other matters. In one typical instance, an Arkansas land deal called Castle Grande, the majority



The whiffs of scandal will not lift from Bill Clinton's campaign

report states that "it appears that Mrs. Clinton was apprised of both the relevant laws and facts that made the Castle Grande investigation irregular." The Democratic majority found "no credible evidence" of improper conduct on her part. "The verdict with which the majority jocques its attack on Hillary Rodham Clinton is a surprise," added the Democratic minority. "Very evil is portrayed as a most minor light."

Analysts started with relief from the majority's vigorous efforts to gauge the impact of the FBI files on the Newt Gingrich majority. They conclude that "Filegate" may damage Clinton, even among voters inclined to discount his record of character issues. Others express impatience with the stabbings, caresses and sprays of the Clinton team. Famed Washington columnist Maureen Dowd in *The New York Times*: "It might turn out to be the first White House in history to be guilty of a cover-up and not a crime."



Clinton: 'Whiffs of scandal' split

Clinton later apprised them to state of files. That trial follows May 26 fraud convictions of two of Clinton's Whitewater partners and his successor as governor, Jim Guy Tucker, who has resigned.

In the new trial, as in the previous one, Clinton is on call for videotaped testimony. And last week, prosecutors named the President's longtime friend, Bruce Lindsey, his 1990 campaign treasurer and now White House adviser, as an unindicted co-conspirator in the bankers' trial. By doing so, the prosecutors seem to make Lindsey bad with bankers in 1990 as plausible as evidence. But politically, Lindsey's designation lends a similar hue to the trial. The most notorious unindicted co-conspirator was Donald Noyes in the Watergate trials of his bosses after the 1970s.

Another Watergate colic, barking on Nixon's political "smearist list," foods the FBI files case. That new upturn came when Congress found that a White House security aide had obtained sensitive FBI records in late 1993 and early 1994 on 400 people—including the FBI ban on British beef sales imposed because of "mad cow disease," a fatal cattle ailment linked to a deadly human brain disease. In turn, London will stop its non-pasteurization policy, under which it valued 100 EU customers in recent weeks. To end the ban, Britain must destroy all cattle born before 1989 and another 100,000 cattle born abroad between 1989 and 1994.

World NOTES

AIR SAFETY CONCERN

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration grounded the budget airline ValueJet after citing it for 34 safety violations, including problems with landing gear, motor, engines and safety reporting. Release of the FAA probe of ValueJet, sparked by a May 11 crash in the Florida Everglades that killed 110 people, was accompanied by a shakeup at the agency in which its chief of safety resigned. Critics refused comment on reports that the U.S. transport department was investigating possible criminal conduct at the FAA, including fraud and lax oversight of ValueJet.

MAD COW CRISIS ENDS

At a European Union summit in Florence, Italy, Britain and its partners agreed to a step-by-step lifting of the EU ban on British beef sales imposed because of "mad cow disease," a fatal cattle ailment linked to a deadly human brain disease. In turn, London will stop its non-pasteurization policy, under which it valued 100 EU customers in recent weeks. To end the ban, Britain must destroy all cattle born before 1989 and another 100,000 cattle born abroad between 1989 and 1994.

BLAMING CUBA

A UN report to be released this week concludes that two U.S. civilian planes were in International waters when Cuban forces shot them down last February, killing four people. The French-based International Civil Aviation Organization also said Cuban fighter planes had failed to warn the U.S. Congress, flown by a Cuban exile group, before rejecting the report.

TRADE WAR AVERTED

A major trade war between China and the United States was averted when China agreed to close piracy compacts, reduce subsidies and crack down on copyright thieves.

Washington then withdrew its threat to impose 300-percent tariffs on \$30 billion worth of Chinese leather and electronics.

THE SLAVE TRADE

Two American reporters said they had bought and freed two enslaved boys in Sudan for about \$700 each. The journalists wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* that they were responding in part to Nation of Islam leader Rev. Louis Farrakhan, who had challenged the media to find proof that slavery existed in Sudan, a Muslim country.

An Arab challenge to Israel

Kings, presidents and prime ministers from across the Middle East gathered in Cairo at the weekend for the first Arab summit since Iraq invaded Kuwait almost six years ago. Leaders from 21 countries—excluding Iraq, which was not invited—were keen on presenting a united front in response to the recent election of Israel's Jewish Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The Arab States believe the peace process is threatened by Netanyahu's unwillingness to trade land for peace, the basic principle of negotiations that led to peace treaties between Israel and Egypt, the Palestinians and Jordan. In a draft communiqué, the leaders called for the immediate resumption of Middle East peace talks based on the return of captured Arab territories.

In Cairo, Netanyahu's newly installed foreign minister argued the Arab leaders not to pressurize the new government. "There are no issues in the Israeli government approach. There are a lot of issues, there are a lot of positives," David Levy told reporters. "The government hasn't even had a week in office—already they judge it?" In a speech after swearing in his new cabinet, Netanyahu endorsed his government's commitment to peace and security and to observing water-related agreements. Yet the government has not decided whether Israeli troops will pull out of the West Bank town of Hebron, as agreed in 1995. The withdrawal was scheduled to take place last March but was delayed in reaction to a rash of suicide bombings in Israel by Islamic militants. Palestinians view Hebron as a litmus test for the new government.

To assuage Israeli analysts, Netanyahu called his first internal litmus test choosing a cabinet. Netanyahu created a special portfolio for Shaul Mofaz and Avigdor Lieberman after a revolt by other ministers forced him to come in as his new to block Shas from cabinet. Similarly, Netanyahu backed down and appointed his Likud rival Dan Meridor as finance minister after Meridor refused to take a lesser post.



Egypt's Hosni Mubarak greets Envoi of Bush: invited

No to Boutros-Ghali

The United States has vowed to veto the appointment of UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to a second five-year term as head of the world body. "The President now believes it is very important to get New leadership," says UN Secretary General's spokesman Mike McCurry. President Bill Clinton decided earlier this year to oppose Boutros-Ghali, a 73-year-old Egyptian, largely because he has tried to limit a blocked UN bureaucracy. Boutros-Ghali rejected a U.S. proposal that he serve a one-year re-

term and left in November, 1997, at age 75. "I still hope the United States will change its position. We still have six months until the election," Boutros-Ghali said.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman said Clinton supports Boutros-Ghali's candidacy, but the decision will ultimately be made by the Security Council, where the United States can veto as well. Among those suggested as alternatives are Irish President Mary Robinson, Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland and Japan's Seikaku Ogata, the UN high commissioner for refugees.

Executives are nervously pushing new numbers into their calculators at the headquarters of Ghislain Mines Ltd. in Williams Lake, B.C. The company plans to begin construction of a massive 200-million-copper mine in Chile next month, but even their best estimate of just how much money they will make has been snuffed by Taisei Hamanaka—the chief copper trader at Tokyo's Sumitomo Corp. On June 13, Sumitomo officials suddenly fired Hamanaka—who is also known as "Mr. Five Per Cent" for the share of the world copper market he once controlled—claiming he had illegally manipulated the copper market for 10 years, losing \$34 billion in the largest trading debacle in history. As the scandal spread last week, copper prices tumbled on global markets and regulators around the world began investigating Hamanaka's links to other firms. Ghislain president Bill McKeyton was not optimistic about the outcome: "There is a lot of speculation," he said. "I don't think you can get to the bottom of it."

Hamanaka was a legend in trading circles even before he

How far will Japan's massive trading scandal spread?

Denting copper

self-destructed. The quiet 48-year-old, wearing his trademark brown suit as he worked with 50 other brokers behind plain metal desks, would buy to drive prices up, sell to bring them down, forcing competitors to follow his lead. He was also, it turns out, cooking the books. For nearly a decade, Hamanaka had lied on paper records to cover his losses, which when the counting was done could top \$4 billion, insiders say. His scheme unravelled when sales records, which were normally divergent in him, somehow reached the other surprise people in accounting. Hamanaka promptly confessed, leaving it to Sumitomo Corp. president Tomiohiko Akiyama to take the heat. "I deeply apologise for having caused this trouble," said Akiyama, as he bowed sharply at a news conference in Tokyo. "I am overwhelmed with shame."

International regulators believe the trading scandal goes beyond Hamanaka. In Washington last week, officials with the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission said they would explore "all and any relationships" Sumitomo had with other firms dealing in copper. In London, Britain's Serious Fraud Office, which probes complex financial crimes, announced it was investigating the Sumitomo affair after discussions with regulators at the London Metals Exchange, home

to 94 per cent of the world's copper trading. In addition, Britain's top regulatory agency, the Securities and Investment Board, will examine every aspect of the exchange's operation. LME chief executive David King vowed to co-operate. "We will hang them high and publicly."

In Canada, which supplies about 15 per cent of the world's copper, the long-term effect of the collapsing prices was still uncertain. Bruce Reid, an analyst with Yorkton Securities Inc., notes that a number of new copper mines around the world were scheduled to open over the next two years, and the increased production would have forced copper prices down even without the Hamanaka affair. Most Canadian companies had already left those declining prices into their budgets and profit forecasts; some New York City commodities analysts encouraged clients to sell any shares they have in copper-producing companies well before the Japanese scandal. Share prices of two of Canada's leading nickel producers, Rio Algom Ltd. and Falconbridge Ltd., both of Toronto, have been dropping since reaching their 1986 highs in late May, although prices last week in both firms remained steady.

There is no doubt that Hamanaka's de-

ception will have a direct impact on Ghislain's new copper mine in Chile. Construction will begin next month, but Ghislain chief financial officer Paul Sweeney said the current crisis is troubling. "The copper price has made an headlines a little more recently," said Sweeney. "There had been an expectation that market prices would ultimately fall. But nobody expected it to happen in such a way."

Rogue trading, of course, is nothing new. In December, 1994, Orange County, Calif., declared bankruptcy after revealing that it had lost \$2.2 billion in bonds and derivatives that its treasurer had purchased. In July, 1995, Japan's Domes had disclosed that Toshiba (pock), a bond trader at its New York operations, lost \$1.5 billion over 12 years selling U.S. government securities. And in perhaps the most sensational loss of all, Nicholas Leson, a Singapore-based bond trader with the British bank Barings PLC, lost \$1.8 billion, plunging the venerable firm into bankruptcy.

In all the cases, regulators were left trying to answer one simple question: how did the wheel-dealer get away with it for so long? While there is no definitive answer, there is a common thread running through—none of the top executives at the corporations seemed to have safeguards to ensure that they knew exactly what their employees were doing. And as long as there were healthy profits, no one seemed to care. So, Hamanaka was so respected that many young traders wanted to work with him. And when Akiyama became president of the firm in 1990, he immediately asked to see him. "I felt relieved," recalled Akiyama, "since he was a sincere man contrary to my expectation."

In reality, Mr. Five Per Cent was secretly crooked. According to Akiyama, Hamanaka kept a private set of books carefully detailing

Altimira mine at Williams Lake, British Columbia, where copper is being mined.



Mr. Five Per Cent was a legend in the metal market

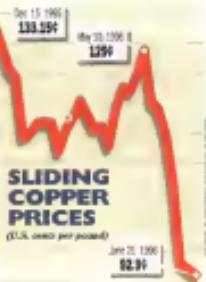
his illegal trades. But for the moment, the details remain murky. In his latest sojourn, industry observers speculate that, at a time when influential commodity-trading firms were damping copper, Hamanaka may have been buying massive amounts of the metal to prop up prices artificially.

Akiyama, who says his firm may yet seek police to charge Hamanaka with fraud, blamed the whole debacle on the actions of a single individual, and not company-wide negligence. "Hamanaka abused the name of Sumitomo Corp," he said. "He carried through the trades entirely on his own initiative." Commentators in Japan, however, were not buying Akiyama's lone-wolf theory. Could the illegal scheme of each an influential trader really go undetected at Sumitomo, a 490-year-old company that was considered one of the most conservative and well run in the country? Even the chief cabinet secretary of the government, Shigeru Kaneko, complained that the scandal was a reminder of declining corporate norms. Japanese officials also said the incident had damaged Japan's reputation abroad. "Copper is important to the country," stated an editorial in the Tokyo daily newspaper Yomiuri Shimbun. "The eye-boggling losses and lax management will all adversely affect international trust in Japanese corporations."

People who have worked closely with Hamanaka, however, say officials at LME were to shoulder some of the blame because they were warned about his shady deals almost five years ago. In 1991, David Dredfield, a copper trader who was then based in London, told authorities that Hamanaka had asked him to falsify trading records. Hamanaka was subsequently investigated in what became known as the Coprogate affair, but no case was ever found. Two years later, the LME probed his trading again but took no action.

Hamanaka's power was never in question. Earlier this year, regulators that he had left Sumitomo drove prices down on international markets. And after his confession, the price of copper tumbled 11 per cent to \$2.9 cents (U.S.) a pound last week. Many commodity brokers now believe that it could decline further because Hamanaka had amassed a store of 400,000 tonnes of copper at Sumitomo. If the firm decides to sell off its massive holdings, traders fear prices will slide again. Akiyama tried to calm the market by assuring traders that the company had "no immediate plans" to dump its hoard. But in the suddenly volatile world of copper trading, no one was taking anything for granted.

TOM PENNELL with SUZENOBAY KANGUCHI in Tokyo



DIAMOND MINE CLEARED

A federal environmental review panel has endorsed a controversial \$600-million diamond-mining project in the Northwest Territories. The proposal by DiP Diamond Inc. "has the potential to provide significant benefits to the North and northerners," the panel concluded. The decision is subject to federal cabinet approval.

RADIO MEGADEAL

America's biggest radio broadcaster, Westinghouse Electric Corp., is paying \$5.3 billion for Infinity Broadcasting Corp. The purchase gives Westinghouse control of 80 radio stations. Westinghouse paid \$5.4 billion for CBS earlier this year.

CANADA FIRST

Canada will likely outperform all other major industrial countries next year, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. In its 1997 forecast, the OECD says the Canadian economy will grow by 3.4 per cent, well above the average 3.0-per-cent growth predicted for the other G-7 countries.

WIST SALE APPROVED

The U.S. government has approved Thomas Corp.'s \$4.7-billion purchase of West Publishing Co. of St. Paul, Minn., but only if the Canadian firm sells about 55 of West's publications, mostly legal journals. Thomas has been selling off newspapers to concentrate on business databases and newsletters.

LAIDLAW REVISES BID

Laidlaw Inc. has restructured its bid for Scott's Hospitality Inc., which includes 400 Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets and 6,800 school buses. The change came after Papa Goya Canada Ltd. said to stop Laidlaw from selling KFC to A & W Food Services of Canada Inc. The deal will create a separate company for KFC while giving Laidlaw nearly a quarter of North America's school bus market.

LOEWEN EXPANDS

The Loewen Group Inc. of Burnaby, B.C., is teaming up with a U.S. investment bank to buy the largest privately owned funeral home operator in North America. Loewen and the Blackstone Group of New York City will pay \$95 million for Paris Succession Inc. of Chicago, Loewen's North American second-largest funeral company.



Peisner: Expecting a big chunk of money?

The promoter hits hard times

Murray Peisner, the colorful but ailing Vancouver-based mining stock promoter, is in financial trouble again. The 75-year-old businessman, who suffered a stroke last year, confirmed he could not come up with enough cash to pay his millions of

shares he purchased in Prime Equities International Corp., a company he controls. "I was expecting a big chunk of money but didn't come in," Peisner said last week, from his home in Scottsdale, Ariz. Transfer listing reports show that Peisner sold about 700,000 shares of Prime Equities during April and May but bought 1.7 million, increasing his holdings in the company by 800,000 shares. He also recently bought a large block of the controversial mining stock Cartwright Resources Ltd.—\$601 paid last month that skyrocketed to \$23 in May before crashing to the \$2 range last week.

The "Pez," a former owner of the Canadian Football League's H.C. Laundry and Cartwright, was a factor in his recent financial difficulties, even though some reports suggest he lost more than \$1 million on the Cartwright play Prime, which Peisner founded in 1980, was as much as 22 days, many of them little-known mining companies. Prime's share price has been in a free fall lately, sinking to last week's close of \$2.18 from a high of just under \$20 a few weeks ago. Peisner, meanwhile, can't be plagued by ill health. Last summer, his son Michael, a Vancouver-area physician, briefly took over the day-to-day management of the company, but Murray Peisner returned to the helm a few weeks later. More recently, he had planned to throw himself a gala party in Las Vegas, Nev., over the June 15 weekend. He canceled it at the last minute due to medical problems.

THOMAS

Confrontation over Cuba

Cuba is joining forces with China to fight a U.S. law that threatens to ban Chinese companies from doing business in Cuba. The act, which received presidential approval in March, allows Congress to ban any executive and their families entry into the United States if they have invested in property

seized from Americans at the 1959 Cuban revolution. Last week, the Canadian government co-chaired by propane its own law that would allow firms to countervail and recover any damages caused by the U.S. actions. Many countries, including Canada and Mexico, have complicated the legislation in a U.S. attempt to set policy for other countries.

AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT: The Helms-Burton Act, a controversial bill named after its Republican backers in Congress that is designed to banish the U.S. embargo against Cuba. The act, which received presidential approval in March, allows Congress to ban any executive and their families entry into the United States if they have invested in property

seized from Americans at the 1959 Cuban revolution. Last week, the Canadian government co-chaired by propane its own law that would allow firms to countervail and recover any damages caused by the U.S. actions. Many countries, including Canada and Mexico, have complicated the legislation in a U.S. attempt to set policy for other countries.

A piece of the sports action

A Toronto businessman who has been parsing a major league sports franchise for three decades has purchased a stake in Maple Leaf Gardens Ltd. Construction magnate Lazarus Tanenbaum paid \$200 million for Paris Succession Inc. of Chicago, Loewen's North American second-largest funeral company.

Maple Leaf Gardens just bought a franchise



The Nation's Business

Peter C. Newman

A revolutionary twist on Indian statehood

Last week's First Ministers' conference in Ottawa was hampered by three unwanted guests. There was Pierre Trudeau, the Phantasm of the Canadian Order, who originally detonated the whole crap constitutional process, leaving a provincial legacy that guaranteed failure. There, too, was Brian Mulroney, who must have spiced the discussions on personalizing the idea of a political career overjoyed on the cross of constitutional reform. But the lastest absence was Ovide Mercredi, once so influential that he attended the gatherings and helped to banner together the Charlottetown accord. He has since been reduced to a ignored player, let's estimate the conference gives to waste placards and shout the same thing. An uncharitable

Trudeau and Mulroney were otherwise occupied, but the leader of the Assembly of First Nations exploited this exclusion by staging a Force 10 temper tantrum. "We're shut out, then obviously our influence is out," Mercredi bitterly complained before the meeting began. "Our option now is to pursue sovereignty complete with limit or Palestinian demands for territory."

The Assembly of First Nations leader did not spell out how he intends to turn his followers into Stato Fera or the Palestine Etherian Grizzlies, but his out accurately reflected the mounting frustration of Canada's aboriginal community. The most creative response came from Joe Clark, a hereditary chief of the Cree Nation. "Mercredi is taking an extreme point of view that won't fit, but he has to take the position that we are sovereign," Clark told me last week. "That's why I'm advocating an alternate form of federal socialism that would allow us to reach a form of sovereignty within Canada. You have to proceed on the basis of what's double and what's real."

Clark, 48, advocates a revolutionary constitutional arrangement that would enfranchise the aboriginal people and their scattered reserves into the equivalent of a new Canadian province—all an integral part of the country, but with specific and far-reaching powers of self-government.

A passionate voice for his cause, Clark has significant credibility in his own community. He headed the 1977 delegation that met the Queen at Balaclava Palace to work out certain treaty issues, and acted as constitutional co-ordinator for the National Indian Brotherhood during the 1981-1982 nation-wide talks. More recently, he has led the fight by 180 Canadian native communities for control over their oil and gas resources. Clark has already signed two agreements with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, guaranteeing new approaches to land management by the industry. And this week, he is attending a "land summit" in Edmonton, which will formulate a long-standing strategy to force the federal government to transfer oil and mineral rights to native bands.

"On a national scale, we simply can't be effective with 576 band governments instead of one collective First Nations parliament," Dan Morris says. "We should command a land mass equivalent to Nova Scotia and a population of about half a million. It's the only way sovereign and treaty rights can be entrenched and our long-term survival can be ensured."

The notion of uniting Indians under the umbrella of a native province isn't new; but Clark intends to make it the dominant issue among aboriginal demands. He first proposed the idea at a First Nations conference in 1982, but was shot down for trying to go to far too fast. His a sign of how militant the aboriginal leaders have become that Clark's initial opposition now is from chiefs who argue he isn't going far enough.

"To the extent that Indians sovereignty includes a political, fiscal, economic and geographic separation from Canada, this is not a sensible package," stresses one of Clark's private strategy papers. "We can endanger our present public support and destroy our credibility. Statehood, on the other hand, is a feasible and desirable option because it recognizes our inherent sovereignty in existing constitutional terms and offers a legitimate basis for Indian tribes to exercise control over their affairs."

Just because he departs from Mercredi's threats doesn't make Dan less robust. He interprets the act of Confederation in 1867 as recognizing the sovereignties of Ontario, Quebec and the former Maritime colonies, but adds that the Indian nations were placed under the control of a bureaucracy charged with assimilating their people and separating them from their lands. Clark argues that there are three regions—the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Indian territories—that deserve full-blown provincial status. "Unlike other provinces," he says, "the Indian state would enjoy special language and cultural rights, somewhat along the lines granted French Canadians, as well as special hunting, fishing and trapping provisions."

Clark visualizes the new Indian province as having 12 seats in the Commons, with no own lieutenant-governor (a trivial effort), a legislature (probably in Ottawa with a council of elders serving as its upper house), and its own civil service. He is vague about extracting additional payments from Ottawa, to make up for Indian resources and lands lost to the First Nations as a result of unfair actions in the past."

Joe Clark may be drawing in sepoys, but he is a true believer and will soon get into active politics. "I won't run for Mercredi's job," he says, "because the Assembly of First Nations is an outfit that's had it's day. It's not really accepted by the people, who see it more as a chief's organization. Perhaps the only sensible thing would be for us to find our own political party. At the moment, we have a patchwork of issues, with Mercredi out there walking around in a black-skirted pocket, signing meaningless agreements."

BY MARCI McDONALD

Beneath the lacy Victorian railings, the tables had been laid in sumptuous white damask. Fine Valenay & Bach chaises gleamed in the sunlight streaming through the arched casement of the Bistro of the Toronto Art Collection Foundation. But amid banqueting merrily arranged by John Turner and Ontario Lt.-Gov. Hal Jackson, a cadre of black-clad waiters laid the silver for a decidedly different crowd. At 59, Hugo Vlach, a man who had spent four decades earning to repay and the rich, was flinging his doors open to 100 of the city's homeless. For years, he had watched as their numbers grew—herding down in layers of sleeping to stars at the forbidding splendour, their faces pressed against the glass. Once, his patrons had to step around the human fixtures on the pavement in the way is there. Upnow, in his former location, Vlach had never arranged such misery. But now, he confronted it daily, at night, in banished dreams. "A simple man like me—what can I do to help society?"

Canadians, shocked into the realization that poverty's address is in their own backyards, are reaching out to make a difference



Vlach (right) with sous-chef Romeo Boreas at Bistro MacAlpin's for their soup helping the homeless.

LOCAL HEROES

he says. "I can't create 100 jobs. But you can't close your eyes."

On a winter Sunday with a banzád chill factor, his wife and three grown children joined him as their patrons parked shopping carts at the doorway to stunty winter haute. Some had spruced up for the occasion, others donned black eye-rubs. A galley plated up the chef ladled out bowls of steaming leek and potato soup, arctic plates of turkey and, for dessert, slices banana, all served with the same courtly gravity accorded the patissiers at Maxim's. "You should have seen the looks on their faces," Hugo marvels.

He had wanted to dispense "a day of joy," as he puts it. But later, he realized that he had found that joy within himself. During the months that followed, he became a man possessed. Each Friday, he brought dinner to the Out of the Cold program in the parlous hall of St. Michael's Cathedral, one of 50 charities that had fended through the worst winter months to shelter 500 of the city's dispossessed. But three men still free to sit on the snow, one a newspaper photographer who had snapped Vlach in an apron at the church-sister table, but he declined to identify himself. "I don't do it to get my name in the paper," he says. "I care these people something because I've been there."

Now, on a breezy summer afternoon, only the weather has improved. As the students still gather among the gardens across King Street, he is already planning some gauntlet奔bending of

his patrons to underwrite an expanded meal service and website. His gesture, he knows, is but a Band-Aid on the gaping wound of society as the chasm grows ever wider between the country's rich and poor. But at a time when all the news often seems to be bad news—when the nation's centre as long as seems to be breaking, and government and corporate cutbacks are retarding the civilization—Vlach and thousands of other Canadians are stepping forward to act out, in various ways, the age-old adage: better to light a candle than curse the darkness.

For some, it is an act of defiance—a protest against the ideology that they are not condemned to live in dignity on the star of belief and profound human ideals. For others, it is a return to the way they believed them, and as he who communities looked after them, without any conditions, government bureaucracy. But whatever the motivation, whether by design or default, citizens across the country are calling on their sleeves and stitching the threads. In unpremeditated numbers, they are donating their time and money, reaching out to those abandoned by dashed charity and social service budgets or finding innovative ways to rebuild their neighborhoods from the grassroots.

No one has bothered to measure their strength since a 1987 Statistics Canada survey estimated the country's volunteer force at 13 million. At the time, the Canadian Council on Social



Development costed out their efforts as worth \$20 billion. Nine years later, experts concur, their ranks are swelling, galvanized in part by the increasingly palpable need. "There's no question about it," says Paddy Bowe, executive director of Volunteer Canada, an Ottawa-based clearing house. "We're at the beginning of a wave of enthusiasm for volunteerism—that's the upside of all this. People want to make a difference and they're reaching into their pocketbooks and their wallets."

And still in its nascent form, are they uniting together to give it the heft it is in the position for that Canada has ceased to be a generous nation. But when the wallets and doors to the school fair are being depleted by mounting deficits, poor Canadians have been shooed into the realization that poverty's address is right in their own backyards. "We looked around because we recognized the problems here were relatively minor," says Tim Brothwell, former executive director of Inter-Parcs, an international development agency, who now leads The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation in Montreal. "Those days, we're in a position that our problems are pretty insatiable."

Last year, the United Way registered a modest 5 percent increase in donations across Canada. But Bob Brown of Toronto's ArtMarketing, the country's leading intermediaries for nonprofit institutions, reports that more than four-quarters of his fund-raising campaigns were up by 15 per cent. The newest donors are big business or those in law-and-order neighborhoods. "The heart is there—I would say it's better than

even" he notes. "But it's scary people are responding with little notes saying they're not employed and all about apologizing for not giving more. There's a sense of 'There, but for the grace of God, go I'."

The face of volunteerism, too, is changing. A pastime once thought to be the monopoly of middle-class homeowners is increasingly populated by the young and the unemployed—both often desperate for job skills. "You see a lot of young people using volunteerism to build their resumes," says Penelope Rose, executive director of Newfoundland's Community Services Council. New Canadians are joining in as well. In Alberta, the province with the highest volunteer rate, Joyce MacAlpine, a 53-year-old mother of five from Trinidad, retired after 28 years as a supply supervisor at a Calgary hospital and promptly opened a thrift shop whose proceeds are devoted to sending students to college. In only one year, selling donated clothing and household items, MacAlpine has already sponsored \$7,000 in scholarships and bursaries at the University of Calgary and two community colleges. Years ago, she explains, a stranger's gift allowed her own daughter to graduate from McGill. "People helped my life," she says. "Sometimes, all a child needs is a barrier to get out of the rut rice."

In academic circles, altruism has steadily become a broad topic. After years of neglect, economists and social scientists are sprouting books and bairns, finally giving the voluntary sector as due with titles like "social capital," the "Third Sector" and the "civil society." In mid-June, Jeremy Rifkin, head of Washington's Foundation on Economic Trends, fired up the annual meeting of Whopper's Social Planning Council with the thesis that do-gooders represent a potent new political force around the world. In his grim vision of a future when 80 per cent of the population may have jobs, he predicts that the sole hope for a meaningful existence—and for rescuing the country's declining civic—may lie in mobilizing that can-do community spirit. But he acknowledges the irony of the subject's newfound cachet. "This sector has always been led by women, and, frankly, that's why we didn't pay enough attention to it," he says. "Then, when men started going to work in the community, we started studying it and using words like 'social capital'."

But the sexiest words come from politicians—often those engaged in the most drastic assaults on the social safety net. Never has the voluntary community been faced as literally pummeled—or asked to do so much with so little. "We all of us feel a collective despair," says Bowen. "Volunteers don't have the capacity to pull us up, so that the government used to do it." Worse, they lack many of the professional skills. "Across the country, community activists become a crisis looming." There's a real line in the voluntary sector that we're finding ourselves left to pick up the pieces," says Newfoundland's Rose. "We've got to be careful we're not just a dumping ground."

In Ontario, Premier Mike Harris has announced an initiative to promote volunteerism under MPP Julia Macos, but he failed to note that his budget had shattered several provincial volunteer



Grant, Yukon, Yukon at StreetCity village for the chemically homeless

A prevailing sense of 'There, but for the grace of God, go I'

centres and may force up to 40 Toronto charities to close. Like others, Anne Goldie, president of the United Way of Greater Toronto, sees the country caught in two conflicting currents. "On the one hand, the balance is shifting to selflessness. And there's a real risk it's leading to a harsher society," she says. "But on the other, there is just a huge reservoir of compassion. Wherever I go, people are saying, 'I'd like to help.'"

Is that altruism? Is it a fundamental question—one that, even more than the issue of national unity, may shape the country's future? "We've had a crisis in Canada right now," says Bowen, "about what kind of society we're going to be."

From the outside, it might be another abandoned warehouse along Toronto's waterfront. Only a smaller, hand-scrubbed sign on the brick, betrays the fact that inside the former and track depot lurks a unique experimental village for the chemically homeless called StreetCity. Beneath its rooftop skylight, a central ally studded with polished jahrs and park benches has been christened Main Street. On either side, eastern granite curbs rise to terraced steps, each with a dozen furnished rooms—home to 71 single men and women who pay \$205-a-month rent to call that modest shelter their own, complete with a key for the door.

With custom kitchens and living rooms, StreetCity is an attempt to replicate the rooming houses that vanished when yuppie gentrification descended on neighbourhoods. "We live in and out of every one of the houses in Toronto, and this is the most blessed place," says Johnny Borden, 50, who has spent most of his life on the street. "This is my 10th home." Borden was one of the original when the Fred Vieira Mission and assorted social agencies set out to give a group of long-term users—a people a chance to build and manage their own housing. When inspiring residents looked at the initial architect's plan, one demanded it as a "—ing penitentiary." Together, they came up with the current design. Many like Borden were hired to help in the construction

and are now renovating a second warehouse. Tenants are hired as maintenance workers and a residents council provides residents' complaints—occasionally evicting the incorrigible.

For Bill Grant, StreetCity offered a haven from which to piece back together a shattered life. A concrete contractor, Grant lost his job at home, when the discs in his back began to disintegrate. Now, after graduating to a bachelor apartment in another affiliated project, he runs StreetCity's kickshop and Gracious Catering service, leading other tenants' basic business skills. "I still live in with this place," he says. "People look out for each other here."

From around the world, low-cost housing experts have hailed StreetCity as one of the most innovative solutions on the map that the worldwide lack \$2 billion in government funds to rehabilitate. "I got a letter from a concerned citizen along why we didn't just neglect all of the homelessness and tell them to head to the hills," says Paul Dowling, executive director of Homes First Society, the nonprofit agency that oversees the project. "Well, it takes a lot of money to do that."

Dowling argues that even with a federal right to a roof has long been part of the unmet postwar pact Canadians signed with their governments. But as governments pull out of the public housing business, StreetCity may become a casualty. Struggling for replacement funding, Dowling launched the pro-

Bill cooking at the Andrew Street bar: looking after their own



ject's first direct mail campaign in May, but he knows it will be a hard sell. Placing in a soup kitchen is more likely to tug at public hearts—and purse strings. "It's the kind of thing you can point to that proves people do care," he says. "But it doesn't deal with the root problem."

Like the country's 70,000 other registered charities, StreetCity is now increasingly dependent upon the whims of private foundations and corporations—a cash pool that Patrick Johnstone, president of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, refers to as a "pandemic bubble." In 1993, out of \$30 million in charitable revenues, only 12 per cent came from that pool, nearly 50 per cent came from government. "As governments cut back, that money is not going to be replaced," Johnstone points out. "The way to fill that gap is to have the animals come down, they're raising each other money." Agrees Judy Maxwell, president of Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc., in Ottawa. "The competition for funds is just desperate out there."

Already, some charities have been forced to allow the corpo-

rate fashion, downsizing and pooling resources. In Alberta, three organizations merged to become the Big Sisters and Big Brothers of Calgary. A year later, its officers reported a budget surplus—and a savings of \$20,000 on rent alone. But contrary to conventional wisdom, most have little to pay nearly half of all charities often not a single paid employee. Instead, programs are being trimmed or thrown out. "Every organization is cutting back," says Maxwell. "And some are reducing into what I call a 'no—defining their own interests very narrowly. A lot of presents are with a no getting out."

Ironically, many of those least enthusiastic about the results are called leaders for governments to write social spending subsidies, corporate Canada finds itself blithely being told by governments to make up the shortfall. According to the Centre for Philanthropy's projection, private benefactors would have to come up with \$6 for every low-government \$1. "It's simply unrealistic," says Johnstone. "Anytime a government says the private sector should pick up the slack is either incredibly naive or the government is being lied to."

Still, in the disarray of cuts in the country's boardrooms, the public appears unlikely to buy those arguments. As a 1993 survey revealed, Canadians are under the mistaken impression that corporations ante up 30 per cent of charitable donations—not their actual per cent—and expect them to shoulder 20 per cent in the future. Says Martin Connell, a Toronto millionaire who is one of the country's leading philanthropists. "Some corporations are receiving 1,000 applications a month for support. They're saying, 'We're being duped.'

With business donations already at the \$200-million mark, Connell predicts that the country is fast approaching corporate donor fatigue. Instead, more companies are choosing to hand over goods and underestimate their employees' volunteer efforts. Nissan Canada Inc. is doing well in the past three years, its donations have doubled to 45 vans to Meals on Wheels programs from British Columbia to Nova Scotia. The Centre for Philanthropy has encouraged corporate citizenship by leading businesses that donate one per cent of their profits to charity. And this spring in a jolt Toronto community, it handed out its first Imagine awards to five "caring companies" that had devised a creative solution to a pressing community need.

But much corporate largess now comes with strings attached. "It's not a philanthropic endeavor any more," says hedge-fund Rob Brown. "It's a marketing effort—what companies are calling social marketing." Those calculations of how to get the most bang for charitable bucks may leave some causes out in the cold. "Corporations will pick and choose the sexy issues—tubby babies and children's hospitals," says Paddy Bowen, "but not battered women."

Still, Connell sees no end for despair. "We're in the first wave of a 10-year cycle," he says. "It's going to take time before we can sort it all out. But I see a lot of people rising to the occasion."

How are they rising? And what new prescriptions are they developing to cure the very ills that have defined decades of public decision? What, in short, works? That last question lies at the heart of the current charged debate. And, on a summer night last year, it flared up over Whopper's Aboriginal Center, where John McKnight, one of the most controversial figures of neighbourhood

Grassroots facing the last of corporate donor fatigue

activation, was drumming the corporations of Canada's soul work.

A 65-year-old self-styled "urban philosopher" and director of Community Studies at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., McNaught was figuring what he called the "curing paradoxes" for nurturing the very helplessness they were meant to wipe out. He called for toppling existing institutions and letting neighborhoods solve their own problems based on their strengths, not their weaknesses. In his absence, Jessie Hill, the coordinator of the city's Andrew Street Family Centre, cracked a horse-l

"He stole our idea."

A year earlier, the citizenry of Winnipeg's poorest neighbourhoods—called North End—had stretch—and assembled with a plan. Despite social agencies constantly taking the community pulse, the largely Aboriginal population still had no place to hang out or have a handout. "People around here are always told they can't do anything," says HE, a 45-year-old former Manitoba bureaucrat, who grew up in the area to look more at the positive side.

"We wanted to engage over the past year and are now hitting out many local synagogues and mosques.

Inviting community loan funds—entered neighbourhood banks that dole out a few thousand dollars to high-risk would-be entrepreneurs—have also mushroomed since the first one set up shop in a second-floor Montreal apartment six years ago. Borrowed from a novice practitioner among peasants in Palau, 300 km. blobbed-in Quebec above, "All of a sudden," says Marguerite Mendell, head of the School of Community and Public Affairs at Concordia University, "the issue is hot."

Hot too are community economic development corporations—non-profit initiatives designed to meet a local need and yet earn enough back to stay self-sufficient. Blurring the line between business and charity, they were born in the United States during the Sixties. A decade later, a Catholic priest named Greg MacLeod imported the concept to Canada, founding New Dawn Enterprises in Sydney, N.S. Today, it runs 10 Cape Breton enterprises, including youth-breaking services for the region's rapidly growing population. "When New Dawn started, no one could figure out what the hell we were," says president Rankin MacIsaac. "Some people thought we were a bunch of bleeding-heart communists. But we seem to spend less and less time explaining ourselves."

Suddenly, grassroots activism is catching fire across the country. Community foundations, first created in 1954 to keep bequests in the towns that helped make their donors rich, are back in style—the fastest growing philanthropies on the continent. Thirteen of the country's 72 foundations—with assets of \$670 million—



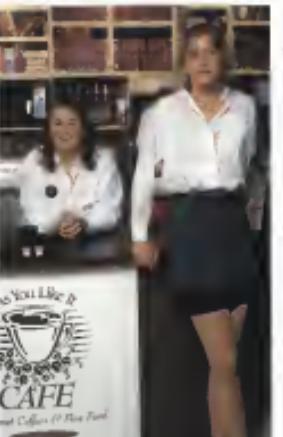
Canadians are pitching in to reweave the national fabric

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Louise Burkhardt at the You Like & CAFE non-profit employment

THE VOLUNTEER HIGHWAY

The telephone remains the most popular way of getting in touch with volunteer agencies. But the World Wide Web is fast providing an easy path to handing up and helping out. "It's my guess that 10 years from now it will be the major way we do business," says Paddy Bowen, executive director of Volunteer Canada. In fact, Frank Hird-Rutter, 67, of Duncan, B.C., has already gone on-line to lend a hand. He offered his services to the Cowichan Valley Volunteer Society after seeing a posting for volunteers on its Internet home page (<http://www.viaweb.net/~frt/volunteers/test.html>). The retired editor of the Cowichan Leader newspaper now drives senior citizens to appointments about three times a week. Says Hird-Rutter: "Someday, I may need help and I hope there will be someone there for me."

Among the first to develop home pages have been such national associations as Ecology Canada (www.ecology.ca)—environmentalists and the Breast Cancer Society of Canada (<http://www.sorbs.net/mecan>)—and the Canadian Council of Aboriginal Peoples (<http://www.ccap.ca/indigenous.html>). "It's the first step to the Internet," says Bowen. "But the potential is massive." And as more Canadians hook up to the Web, nonprofits organizations are helping to lay a new generation of volunteers. Sue Dale Cuthbertson, executive director of Volunteer Vancouver/Vancouver "Put our resources for having a home page at to attract younger people."

It may also help save some money. Bowen, it is believed, will be able to reduce advertising in Vancouver Community Web sites currently under construction. "There are millions of people who volunteer in Canada," says Bowen. "If we can prove that people are using our site a lot, we can go to corporate sponsors and say, 'Look at the potential!'"

For those who depend on volunteer organizations, the Internet is also making life easier. "So many people are home at home," says Barry Arman-Méthot, executive director of A Loving Spoonful (<http://www.meritplus.ca/lovingspoonful.html>), a volunteer agency in Vancouver that provides free meals to people living with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. "Their only connection is through the Web." In the past six months, A Loving Spoonful's home page, which provides tips about healthy living, has been visited about 1,000 times—a respectable figure for a local volunteer organization. "The best part is that it is raising awareness about nutrition and HIV," says Arman-Méthot. But she is the first to acknowledge that there have also been some tangible benefits for her organization. "People who send donations," she adds, "who say they use us on the Web site."

For those who are non-surfers, but interested in finding a means to volunteer, Bowen suggests calling the following national organizations for a list of their offices:

Volunteer Canada: 1-800-679-0401

Canadian Council for Philanthropy: 1-800-363-1178 (<http://www.ccphil.org>)

United Way of Canada/Conseil Canadien des Comités de Secours: 1-800-267-8233
YMCAs Canada: 416-485-9447

Canadian Environmental Network: 613-563-2579

Canadian Parks and Recreation Association: 613-746-5851 (<http://www.acrc.ca/cpra/english/epaper.htm>)

Canadian Association for Community Care: 613-261-7510

Community Foundations of Canada: 613-236-1616

Canadian Conference of the Arts: 1-800-461-3581

(<http://www.cta.ca/cca>)

In a sprawling southwestern Ontario municipality, Paul Barn, executive director of Cambridge's Community Opportunities Development Association (CODA), has given the concept a different spin. In an area devastated by plant and textile mill closures, he has helped transform a former council of churches and unions into a thriving web of job-finding services and small-business training. So what did one enterprise become at dealing with laid-off workers that it has won new customers, compelling contracts for most of the major factory shutdowns in the region?

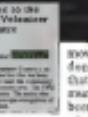
Another CODA job-creation scheme has turned into a political model. In September, Barn collaborated with the Kitchener Public Library to turn an unused corner of its basement into the *Skills As You Like It* centre, complete with an espresso machine. There, under the tutelage of former restaurant manager Alice Lakin, a laid-off welder recipient of the Diana Burkhardt, a 27-year-old single mother, runs a glow restaurant skills and work experience designed to give them a boost to find full-time jobs. At the same time, the library—already receiving free \$250,000 in provincial and municipal funding—collects eight per cent of the take. "We saw it as a service," says the library's enthusiastic CEO, Peggy Whittle, "but we also saw it as a way to raise money."

Now, the realization that the centre's training program may qualify as Ontario's most unusual venture prompted a host of among social assistance recipients to for the change has had a clear success. Last December, when Barn organized a conference workshop at the library—urban, community and social services Minister David Tomsbach—two of the three main members on his board resigned. In a bitter protest, a community that came together to tackle its unemployment woes is now divided over use of the services. They have a new born "All the lines are blurred these days."

Since then, however, has turned the once-placid universe of volunteerism upside down. The Ontario chapter of the Canadian Union of Public Employees has threatened to boycott any United Way agency that co-operates with the policy—a move that could cost charities millions in donations. Volunteer organizers lament that the country could outgrow community spirit at a time when it has never been more needed. "Volunteer is the opposite of voluntarism," laments Paddy Bowen. "It's not chosen; it's forced."

That explosive debate raises questions about the values Canadians will choose in defining the country's course. On the threshold of its 100th year, many feel themselves torn between a seemingly blank fiscal reality and a proud, positive tradition of public compassion. Economist Judith Maxwell sees it as a choice between an increasingly polarized country, scarred by economic inequities and fear, and what she has dubbed a "making society"—one capable of coming up with yet unimagined answers to assure the continued commonsense.

In his bulldogged study of Italy, called *Making Democracy*, Bobo Paterson, a Harvard professor of government, argues that only civic participation guarantees a vibrant—and prosperous—society. But those who first over the uncertain fate of the nation may find themselves reassured. Already, at a time when Canadians have never seemed more cynical about political solutions, they are picking at to reweave the national fabric, neighborhood by neighborhood and city by city, in a design limited only by the impulses of the heart. □



Internet home pages linking up, helping out

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CUTTING BACK

In the cash-strapped 1990s, government is depending on volunteers to fill the breach

Lang before Paul Martin was first elected to the House of Commons in 1988, he was active in a variety of volunteer actions that ranged from teaching to élite-level groups to homelessness in the human rights organization Amnesty International. So when he became finance minister in November, 1993, it was only natural, says Martin, that he pushed cabinet colleagues and bureaucrats "to make damn sure they facilitate the work of community groups." One of his first acts was to arrange federal funding for a pilot project to help find jobs for disabled people in Prince Edward Island that had stalled, awaiting government approval for more than two years. And in two of his past three budgets, he lowered the ceiling at which individuals could claim greater tax deduction from their charitable donations. But despite those efforts, Martin concedes, his desire to help volunteers more heavily has led to what he calls "one inescapable reality: The deficit affects everything that we do as a government."

Ask not what your country can do for you, but rather what it is prepared to encourage you to do for others. In the cash-strapped 1990s, that is the new mantra of governments at all levels, as reductions in spending and services mean that they depend like never before on volunteers to do the work for free that governments once did routinely. "There is no question that governments have to rely on volunteers more than ever in a time of cutbacks, and that makes it absolutely crucial that we do all we can to recognize the importance of volunteers," says Martin.

That desire results itself in a variety of ways. One of the most obvious is a formal recognition of the importance of Canada's volunteers. That is evident in the new *Caring Canadian Awards* that Gov. Gen. Romeo LeBlanc will present to 12 recipients, one from each province and territory, on Canada Day. In March, Martin took part in a ceremony honoring "outstanding corporate citizens"—companies that work with community organizations to help people suffering from disabilities. And there are the *Canada Volunteer Awards*, which Health Minister David Tingley presented to 23 men and women with long records of service to their communities at a ceremony on June 18. Soil Development's *Government has only won* it in recent years and stayed to acknowledge the significant contributions that volunteers make.

to the provinces in the form of annual transfer payments. That means, in turn, that the provinces will trim services and subsidies, as well as the money that they give to municipalities. Since many volunteer groups rely on money from all three levels of government, the effects can be devastating.

Still, many politicians argue that there continues to be a need to fund community organizations. Even in the Liberal party, which supports deep cuts in government spending in almost all areas, some say the Liberals should think twice before cutting grants to community groups. Reform MP Ruth Martin, a medical doctor who volunteers her services each summer at an emergency clinic in her riding on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, describes the present situation for volunteer groups as "a sorry state of affairs." Adds Martin, "The cuts are coming too fast. Stability is needed to plan for the future."

Directly or indirectly, these cuts affect almost all Canadians. One of the great dilemmas is that Canadian governments are cutting spending and support programs precisely at a time when many people need them more than ever. With the onset of new technology and an unemployment rate that has hovered around 10 per cent for most of the decade, an increasing number of Canadians are confronted by career changes, unemployment and the uncertainty that frustrates situations bring.

At the same time, the traditional relationship between government and the country's citizens that economist Judith Maxwell calls "the social union"—the web of rights and obligations that the two sides share—is breaking down. In a recent report entitled *Building Blocks for Canada's New Social Union*, Maxwell and her colleague Margaret Bagnell suggest that the two sides need to jointly establish new definitions of their respective roles in society. That, in turn, suggests that individuals and groups take responsibility for some of the tasks previously performed by government.

Through the years, organizations catering to interest groups

but behind such ceremonies and cheery declarations lie sobering truths. Since the Liberals came to power in 1993, they have slashed spending virtually across the board to eliminate special interest groups that have traditionally counted on federal funding. And over the last two years, they will cut about *one-third* of the \$17 billion they gave away to voluntary organizations in 1993.

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Through the years, organizations catering to interest groups



Ruth Martin (right): the web of rights and obligations is breaking down

and often discredited segments of society have relied on a combination of public and private funds and volunteer efforts. As a 1989 federal government study of volunteers noted, their activities encompass areas "long thought traditionally addressed by that form of traditional provision undertaken within the joy of volunteers, sharing in associations and fellowship among..." As recently as 1993, the federal government spent an estimated \$300 million on a grant funding initiative for non-profit organizations. No precise figures are available as how much that figure has fallen since then, but federal officials acknowledge that across-the-board cuts have affected virtually all groups. Some of these, such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), have controversial and overtly political agendas that on occasion can conflict in the wishes and policies of the government. That has led to accusations from some NAC members that the cuts were politically motivated. But government cuts have also directly or indirectly affected non-profit causes that include refugee assistance groups, children's aid societies, programs to help immigrants adapt to Canada, and charity groups with religious ties that help the impoverished.

In the less and occasionally more 1990s, the reality is that almost every facet of society depends at least in part on volunteers



Worldwide is one example of the increasing efforts of cash-strapped governments to maximize their resources. But, says Paul Martin, while that need cannot be ignored, governments must also take care not to lose sight of another fundamental notion: "Just as government cannot operate without volunteer groups," he says, "so we must remember that volunteers cannot and should not replace the government in many areas." For both sides to function effectively, governments will have to remember to not just ask what volunteers can do instead of them—but also what they can do to help the volunteers.

ANTHONY WILSON SMITH with ANTHONY BRADNEALE and LUKE PISNER in Ottawa

Alberta. At Ottawa's city hall, few people who take the popular annual tour of the government building find the person leading them around is a volunteer. At one park in the city, Joyce Lonsdale, a 75-year-old retired military officer, spends an hour and a half each morning cleaning the massive ice rink of ice. He believes the city's recreation department is "in a time crisis; we're magical and, in turn, provides them. Without her, the park would stay in disrepair because the city cannot afford a supervisor to oversee it. And in Montreal, when the city planned to cut funding at certain rinks three years ago, residents struck a deal, in exchange for maintaining the rinks, the city puts up the boards. This increases the ice and leaves material in operation the rink. Volunteers now maintain 60 of the city's 175 skating rinks. Those are jobs that used to be the responsibility of paid personnel.

At the other extreme, under Ontario's ambitious and controversial workplace volunteer jobs that were once done by volunteers are now being handed to a new group, starting in September. 54,000 able-bodied welfare recipients will begin working for up to 17 hours a week as a condition of qualifying for benefits. Their jobs will range from cleaning parks to cutting grass, leading to the creation of 10,000 new jobs. A similar program exists, on a much smaller scale, in Alberta.

Supporters of the plan, led by Ontario Community and Social Services Minister David Tousignant, argue that it will teach welfare recipients new skills and reinforce their sense of pride. But the program also raises questions that affect both those required to work and those they are supposed to serve. Will an elderly person or invalid feel comfortable knowing that the person assigned to assist them is only there because they are required to be?

Will volunteers, many of whom need a program for pure enjoyment, derive the same satisfaction working beside those who are clearly unhappy at having been drafted to work? As workplace becomes more widespread, who will screen such workers to ensure that they are given appropriate work, and perform it properly? All those issues pose new problems for everyone involved, says Phil Davis, a director of the Community Resources Centre in Kitchener, Ont., which provides services and training to underprivileged people. "People say, 'We won't offend anybody,' but these are vulnerable people out there. We have to do police checks on our applicants. How do we make sure they're not using our facilities?"

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HEROES ON HOME GROUND

Across the country, Canadians are reaching out to make a difference in their own communities

**MAIN STREET YOUTH CENTRE,
GRAND BANK, NFLD.**

A hangout to call their own

The boredom drove them to it. The endless nights with nothing for the youth of Grand Bank, Nfld., to do but hang around the outport's one restaurant or lager on the streets. No wonder the liquor smuggled in from the nearby French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon seemed so enticing. Recently, 12-year-olds could be glimpsed staggering through the southwest Newfoundland fishing community. Until last month, that is. When the Main Street Youth Centre opened in a Depression-era building once used as a drying plant for squid and mackerel, local teens finally had a reason to stay out of trouble. And Newfoundland had a strong indication of how an interested community can take control of its future. Stevens Peter Lovewell, manager of the youth centre, says: "It's a small place like ours can build something like a youth centre."

It is a radical transformation. The 6,300-square-foot plant now houses a mini-gymnasium, a sauna and a 20-seat mini-theatre with big-screen television. There are rooms for Ping-Pong and pool tables as well as shuffleboard and air hockey games. The enterprising teenagers dance floor, complete with stereo and Juke and light machines. "It is really cool," gushes Angela Rose, 15. "A group of us have been trying to put together a drop-in centre for a long time. We never imagined anything like this."

What they needed was a board from some interested adults. Lovewell, a parent with two teenage children, grew motivated after spending a shift as a member of the local RCMP auxiliary who ran across a 15-year-old in a back alley who was too drunk to stand. He and Bob Thomas, a local RCMP sergeant, met with Rose's Main Street Youth Committee and agreed to ask the town to open the long-deferred squad house. He called in suppliers and contractors far away as Japan and California to help cover the \$400,000 in renovation costs. Townsfolk sold "May 4, 1996: Make it happen" buttons, held 500-plus fund-raising dinners and

even a one-day "burn-raise," which attracted 100 volunteers to finish off the construction.

On May 4, six weeks after that first meeting, 500 people showed up for the grand opening. Since then, an average of 200 youths have come through the centre's doors daily, and the management has been turned over to the teens. "We're responsible," says Rose. "If we abuse it, we lose it." Anyone with lager on their breath is banished from the centre. So far, no one has had to be known out, and underage drinking has been cut off at least 90 percent. As Rose stresses: "On Friday night, the youth centre is the place to be." That is often all the motivation any teenager needs.

JOHN DEMONT

Waiting for the youth centre to open: a "mainly cool" place



HELPING HANDS, STONY PLAIN, ALTA. Altruism after school

Even if they were not so young, their dedication would be remarkable. But the eight members of the Helping Hands club in Stony Plain, Alta., are all 11- and 12-year-olds who have learned remarkably well and generously in their dedication to good works. Club president Angela Dean and her friends, all now finishing Grade 6, visit residents at a senior citizens' home every second Thursday after school. And they spend every other Wednesday in a plot new projects—which they map out themselves. In the past 38 months, they have collected garbage around town, produced plays for the senior's home and hosted a Halloween party for children at the University of Alberta Hospital on nearby Edmonton. Members have held bake sales and bottle drives to raise money for the SPCA, and they have distributed information cards offering to

Helping Hands members, from left, and Stephanie Bedford with Beatrix, founder of a club for Good Samaritans in Grade 6.

do chores for seniors and families. Last year, Angela and her friends organized a summer camp for a few hours each week, for children under 5 in the Deans' backyard. And this year, they are catching baseball for kids the same age. In fact, this spring, Angela won a Leader of Tomorrow award from the Volunteer Centre of Edmonton and AT&T, a telecommunications company, for her volunteer activities. "Many times, I have had to tell her to turn the light off," says Angela's mother, Dorothy Dean. "She would stay up late, thinking of ideas—trying to plan something." But Dorothy adds that all eight kids contribute ideas and work on the projects. "I really like helping people," Angela says. "And I don't mind missing playing that, because all of my best friends are in the club."

MARY NEMETH



EACH ONE, TEACH ONE, TORONTO Teaching by example

It began with a sense of outrage. Two years ago, Michael Yarde, a sales manager with a cellular phone company, was incensed by news reports on a shooting spree in a Toronto cafe. "The media said, 'Watch out for young black men in baseball caps,'" he says. "Well, I was young and black and I wear a baseball cap and I was thoroughly insulted." But Yarde chose to win his fury in an unusual way. The 27-year-old bachelor agreed on with Each One, Teach One, a mentorship program for the city's black youth. For the past year, Yarde has played unofficial big brother to Richard Duran, 13, whose single mother was in despair over her son's faltering grades and constant scrapes at school. Now, along Richard to a Blue Jays game or rollerblading along the waterfront, Yarde parcels out judicious advice about homework and life. "I'd rather put my time and money into something like Richard," he says, "than see a spot-battling move jail."

Begin in 1990 by Shanielle Rose, a 20-year-old Toronto legal secretary. Each One, Teach One grew out of her own heartbreak at statistics showing skyrocketing dropout and crime rates for young Toronto blacks. Trained to run a troubled public housing project, she found lots "looking at us like we were aliens from a different planet. I thought, 'Maybe it's because they have no black role models.'" Rose set out to pair disadvantaged adolescents with blacks who were young enough to relate to rapping and hip-hop. For many of the 300 teens she has matched with mentors since, the program offers the first glimpse of a adulthood less driven so unswervingly that some even lack the vocabulary to define it. "One young man and he wanted to be an accountant," she recalls. "But when we sat down with an accountant, he said, 'I thought it was too boring.' It turned out what he wanted to be was a street dancer."

From its roots in downtown Toronto, where she just quit her job as a financial controller, she now travels around the city. Each One, Teach One has flourished, now boasting an office at Foothills College, a national literacy organization, and a full-time staff conference. Rose herself plays mentor to one person, as well as to a handful of girls' clubs. But she admits to occasionally feeling overwhelmed. In April, on the eve of a trip to New York City that she had promised four of the club's young-estrogen women, her corporate sponsorship fell through. She gulped and put the \$3,000 tab on her own credit card. "I couldn't have looked those girls in the eye if I hadn't lost my job," she says. Like her, Yarde has opted to do more than the program's asks. Recently showing up at parent-teacher meetings, he has lent Richard a patch sunny and sent him to basketball camp. "Michael is like an angel from heaven to that kid," marvels Richard's mother, Zenaida Thompson. But Yarde shrugs off the accolades. "My payback," he says, "will be Richard at 21, gainfully employed—and not in jail."

MARCI McDONALD



Durant (left), Rose, Yarde: black role models for a new generation

NISGWA'S ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES INC., MASS VALLEY, B.C. Underwriting opportunity

They are a proud people, descended from traders. But like other native Canadians, the Nisga'a First Nation of the remote Nass Valley in northwestern British Columbia have faced some harsh realities. The four Nisga'a villages in the mountainous region, 800 km northward of Vancouver, are among the poorest communities in the province: unemployment is estimated to exceed 45 per cent. But fortunes are beginning to look up. In March, the Nisga'a signed an unprecedented agreement in principle with the federal and provincial governments. If ratified, the deal will give the 6,000 Nisga'a control over 772 square miles of land, plus resources and fishing rights, and \$150 million in cash. Land claims aside, the Nisga'a have been diligently planning for their economic future. "We just couldn't afford to sit around waiting," says Matthew Moore, general manager of Nisga'a Economic Enterprises Inc., a economically oriented development corporation that earmarks company profits for reinvestment into new ventures, and whose shareholders are all of the Nisga'a people. "We decided to get out there and begin to pursue some development opportunities."

According to Moore, a 45-year-old economics graduate of Simon Fraser

ALICEE JOAMIE, IQALUIT, N.W.T.

Troubleshooter

On a sunny afternoon, Alicee Joamie sits in her Igloolik, a cold presence in the swirling chaos of her daily life. Doors crash open, then slam shut. Children, rush in and out, briefly distracted by the rare sight of the 68-year-old Inuit elder sitting quietly in Igloolik, a predominantly Inuit community of 4,000 in southern Baffin Island. Joamie is a force to be reckoned with. The mother of seven and grandmother of 34 is an avuncular volunteer, visiting sick people in the hospital, counselling villagers about the AIDS threat, and helping to found Baffin's first women's shelter and legal aid clinic. But most of all, Joamie reaches out to try to improve the lives of troubled children and teenagers. Like others

Joamie smiles when she is asked how many foster children she has cared for in the past 20 years. After several rounds of crumpling on the thick fingers of her weathered hands she decides on a number: Two hundred. Most of them were taken from their parents because of neglect or sexual abuse. Some stayed a few days or months, others much longer. One child is still with her after 11 years. Sometimes, parents whose children have been removed from the home look out at her, but she takes it that in stride. Joamie says any need to look at the environment they have created for their children, one after another by alcoholism and domestic violence. "We work from when we get up until we go to bed," she adds, "children don't get taken away."

Joamie also works closely with Inuit teenagers who have run away from their families or stood at the low. Last summer, she served as one of four superintendents who led 16 teens on a camping trip 100 km along Pudlalik Bay. She used to teach them about hunting, sewing and traditional Inuit survival skills as an effort to provide a sense of cultural continuity. But the youngsters, many of whom were chosen because they were

University, the corporation's mission is to pursue opportunities in all sectors. Nisga'a Economic Enterprises—which initially received a huge \$50,000 in federal grants—now has assets of about \$35 million. "We started with basically nothing," says Moore. "All we had were the support, resources, knowledge and good will of our shareholders." Since 1990, these shareholders, a logging joint venture with Babcock Canada, has generated about \$4.5 million in profits for the Nisga'a and has employed, on average, 80 to 90 people—90 per cent of them aboriginal. The Nisga'a also own a lumber company, have just launched a seafood processing and supply business, and have opened a deluxe sports-fishing lodge called Wip Sipoo (Klacker House) at the mouth of the Nass River. When fully operational, says Moore, the four ventures should employ about 250 people. "The main objective is to ensure that those businesses are profitable and that they provide as many opportunities to train managers and create employment," he says. "The focus on profit is mainly to ensure



considered high risks for suicide, brought their troubles with them. One threatened to shoot her compassions with a rifle, another threatened to kill herself with a knife. At one point, when Joamie tried to break up a fight between two girls, one of whom lacked her in the stomach, Joamie did not get angry. "If I had reacted in a negative way," she explains, "they would have responded in a negative way." Since then, many of the young people have become her friends.

Joamie has known hard times herself. Sixty years ago, her parents considered abandoning their premature baby daughter as they left their camp in northern Quebec in a desperate search for food. Luckily, they thought better of it. Joamie spent the rest of her childhood travelling with her family by dog team in pursuit of fish in the game before settling in Igloolik in 1990.

But even in the hardest times, Joamie recalls, her mother helped others by sewing for them or doing what she could. "That's where I learned how to help another person," says Joamie. It is a lesson she constantly passes.

TODD PHILLIPS



Moore: "Nisga'a, we are trying to hold our people back up'

the long-term sustainability of jobs."

Meanwhile, the operation has helped to secure bank loans for small Nisga'a businesses—everything from independent logging and salvaging contractors to bed and breakfasts—which have tripled in number over the past four years. It has also contributed some \$280,000 in a post-secondary and employment-training initiative. And it has created Nisga'a Economic Development Services, a body responsible for monitoring and co-ordinating the long-term strategic economic plan of the region. Future projects under consideration include agriculture, financial services and the development of tourism in the region, noted for its breathtaking scenery and vast lava beds. "Basically, we are trying to build our people back up," says Moore. "To give them the sense that they can do whatever they want. They go out and create businesses, they can be engineers, architects and accountants."

SCOTT STEELE



COVER LOCAL HEROES

L.O.V.E., MONTREAL

A creative fight against juvenile violence

Twelve Radberg learned about the softer, devastating aspect of juvenile violence the hard way, on a cool autumn evening 24 years ago. The Montreal mother was driving with her husband, Daniel, from their home in prosperous Westmount to a dinner party downtown when they saw a bashed youth dive out of the back seat of a parked car and scratch a purse from an elderly woman. "My husband intervened," she recalls. "He jumped out of our car and chased the boy into some bushes. There was a struggle. They was stabbed. He died almost instantly. The boy was a runaway, a kid with a drug history from a broken home in the United States. He was 14 years old."

Not surprisingly, the incident changed Radberg's life. But it did so in a way that even she now finds a little startling: The consequence is a course in photojournalism. Twice a week for five months, the participants, aged 14 to 17, meet after school for a three-hour workshop in the photography department at Dawson College in downtown Montreal. Supervised by Concordia University journalism professor Brenda Zadik, Radberg and Dawson

a dozen managers of assault, gender and race are lighting. The room serves as headquarters of an organization Radberg founded three years ago called L.O.V.E. for Least Out Violence. The teenagers are all enthusiastic participants in the program, an intriguing experiment designed to equip troubled youngsters with the tools they need to walk away from violent lifestyles. "Most of these kids have been defined as being at-risk in some way by police and community workers," Radberg explains. "A lot of them are either victims of violence, or perpetrators themselves. Our aim is to help them develop a critical awareness of the issue, to understand the way things are and, most important, the way things could be."

L.O.V.E., which is funded through private donations, has many facets but the core concept is a course in photojournalism. Twice a week for five months, the participants, aged 14 to 17, meet after school for a three-hour workshop in the photography department at Dawson College in downtown Montreal. Supervised by Concordia University journalism professor Brenda Zadik, Radberg and Dawson

photography instructor Stan Chose, the students are given cameras and access to the equipment labs, and are assigned the task of documenting the words and actions that they believe to be the causes of violence and their ideas about how to prevent it. In practical terms, the end result is an exhibit, as well as the production of a handsome book of the teenagers' work. But along the way, something more profound is achieved. "Not only do they pick up a few practical, marketable skills but they are also given a voice," says Radberg. "And that tends to work magic with their self-esteem."

The project is now in its second year of operation. A total of 30 teenagers have graduated and there are plans to expand the scheme to two other Montreal region alternative high schools. In addition, the students will soon take their work on the road, carrying their message to others across Canada.

An far as Twinkie Radberg herself, she has finally managed to find a measure of comfort in her husband's otherwise graceless death. "We cage moved to the view that the boy who killed my husband was as much a victim as my husband," she says. "I think Dan might agree with that."

HARRY CAMP

TZU CHI CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, VANCOUVER

Enlightenment through service

The soup kitchen just east of Vancouver's scruffy Lower Main Street is easy to find. Long before noon each day, the lineup of hungry men and women waiting for a hot meal extends down the block and around the corner. The free meals are nutritious, but on most days hardly exciting: economical stews or macaroni and cheese. Once a month, however, the hungry and the homeless enjoy something a little different: soup studded with vegetables and other fresh Chinese fare. And they also receive something even more unexpected: the gratitude of the older or so-called Chinese-Canadian volunteers who have prepared and served the wholesome food. Captain Gary Ho, who organizes the monthly meal, "You find out you are fortunate to be able to serve."

The principle is one that the cherubic, soft-spoken humanitarian has built his life around since coming to Canada in 1992. A successful real estate developer in his native Taiwan, he was also a practicing Buddhist there. He followed the charitable teachings of Taiwanese Buddhist master Cheng Yen, whose Tzu Chi Charitable Foundation raises \$800 million annually for charity in Asia. Ho Cheng's advice: Ho has dedicated most of his life since moving to Canada to establishing a North American branch of for Cheng's ideal—as Tzu Chi literature puts it: "To serve the needy and enlighten the earth."

There is certainly no shortage of needy in his adopted country. Ho's example, meanwhile, has inspired an impressive number of other progressive newcomers to share his vision of enlightenment through community service. Taiwanese-Canadians make up the majority of the 2,400 donors and volunteers who have raised more than \$3.2 million in the 23 months since Ho launched the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation Canada. The causes that have been helped, however, know no cultural—

or religious—boundaries. Late last year, Tzu Chi donors bought and distributed warm winter coats to more than 100 Vancouver street kids. And in addition to their monthly appearance at the soup kitchen (run by the rest of the time by the Salvation Army), the group's volunteers also serve Chinese meals at local Vancouver senior citizens' homes each week. Ho emphasizes that every dollar his members raise is spent directly on charity, members bear the cost of the group's administration out of their own pockets.

Tzu Chi Canada's most ambitious project will open as space provided by the Vancouver Hospital & Health Services earlier this October. The Tzu Chi Institute for Complementary and Alternative Medicine will provide the medical setting in a major North American hospital for researchers to examine the effectiveness of such unconventional therapies as acupuncture, aromatherapy and traditional Chinese and European herbal medicine. "Traditional medicine has years and years of history," says Dr. William Tan, an alternative medicine researcher who first inspired Ho's interest in the project. "Compassion sense says there's something there that we have an obligation to share."

By early June, Tzu Chi's donors and supporters—who include former B.C. lieutenant-governor David Lam, a Baptist—had already raised \$1.1 million of the \$6 million that Tzu Chi has committed to contribute to the new center over the next five years.

But Ho, simply raising money, even for such a worthy purpose, counts second in the ethic of personal enlightenment through service. That is why he encourages his members to volunteer time, rather than cash, to charitable efforts. All this is fine, except enrollment in the two-week intensive job-finding course. Of the 550 who have registered for help to date, Hocho is uncertain how many have found employment. But he points out that success is often measured in different ways: a person with a sunshine rambuse license how to write a winning bid, a self-doubt rambuse gain confidence. "We hope to get people to the turnaround point where they say, 'I'm going to make things happen.'

CHRIS WOOD



Stephen's mom

THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT ACTION PROGRAM, OTTAWA

Help for the jobless

Parked next to a pack of refugees literate in the same layer of the Bilkley Creek Baptist Church in an Ottawa suburb, a middle-aged woman sits behind a table covered with job search pamphlets as children point out just what she does sympathetic when a man with a weary face and a weary smile asks her story. The 50-year-old older manager lost his job eight weeks ago and is depressed. Betty Stephen, a parishioner and volunteer, hands the man a registration form. His name will end up on a database of job seekers—one of hundreds of people who have turned to 12 Ottawa-area churches to help them find work.

The Community Employment Action Program is the brainchild of Bilkley Creek member Gertie Roach, who found five members anxious about government layoffs when she returned from a trip abroad last year. "People were really deeply troubled," says Roach, an international human resources consultant. Last September, the program was born, with five different churches signed on. According to Roach, the volunteers are assigned to the "cata" and "cata" for job leads. She will, Roach adds, scan the database for matches. Volunteers hold regular registration sessions, offer counseling and stage seminars on topics such as coping with job loss and resume writing. All this is fine, except enrollment in the two-week intensive job-finding course. Of the 550 who have registered for help to date, Roach is uncertain how many have found employment. But he points out that success is often measured in different ways: a person with a sunshine rambuse license how to write a winning bid, a self-doubt rambuse gain confidence. "We hope to get people to the turnaround point where they say, 'I'm going to make things happen.'

BRENDA BRANSWELL

THE TETRA SOCIETY, VANCOUVER

Engineering freedom

Vancouver city councillor Sam Sullivan, who gets to the office in a wheelchair, remembers how it was before Paul Germain's cast hunger. In 1987, a quadriplegic as a result of a skiing accident eight years earlier, Sullivan was living on welfare and desperate to become more independent and employable. But with limited use of his arms and no use of his fingers, he recalls, "I couldn't use my toilet. I couldn't open the curtains. I couldn't get out the door because of the locks. How could I get a job when I couldn't get out the door?" He remembers sitting in his room, "feeling so frustrated." Finally, Sullivan wrote to the provincial Association of Professional Engineers, asking if its members could keep him in the category in the person of Germain, suffering an impairment with B.C. Hydro and not an independent contractor. The first people he thanked was at the kitchen, where Sullivan could not hold open his freezer door and retrieve food at the store. Eric Germain solved that with a custom-designed door catch, fashioned from a coat hanger. "Within minutes," Sullivan says, "I was revolutionized my life."

Since Germain and other volunteers engineered were finding similarly inventive ways to help after Vancouver area quadriplegics overcame barriers to independence. Since then, the network of volunteers, engineers and technicians making up a club called "assister devices," as Sullivan calls them, for people with disabilities, has blossomed beyond all expectations. Formed in 1988 as the Tetra Society, with Sullivan as its executive director, it now has 37 chapters throughout North America. Last year, the society—whose sole subsidy is a \$25,000 co-ordinator's salary from the provincial government—undertook 1,200 projects.

Few were high-tech or expensive. An umbrella light with a button switch, built in Vancouver for about \$80, allows a deaf four-year-old with cerebral palsy to get her teacher's attention without having to raise her arm. In London, Ont., volunteer biomedical engineers students assembled a specialized book rest for a woman with spinal injuries, using scrap wood and 79 cents worth of hardware. Says Harry Hardy, a retired Bataanuji machine designer who recently completed his 20th project for the society: "I enjoy figuring out the problems and what they need to solve it. It's always nice to see how happy a person is after it's done, how they can do something for themselves that they couldn't before." It is a joy of success, however, that Sullivan, who was his executive director in 1990, shares and understands.

CHRIS WOOD



BELLEVUE MANOR, OTTAWA

Building spirit from the ground up

Moving 30 tons of sand using wheelbarrows pushed by children is probably not the most efficient way to build a park. But the residents of Bellevue Manor in Ottawa's west end would not have had it any other way. For the past five months, hundreds of volunteers from the community, where roughly half the families receive public assistance, have held bake sales, golf tournaments, garage sales and car washes. Their goal: to finance a new playground for their children. But the people of Bellevue wanted more than just a place for their kids to have fun. They also hoped to teach them a lesson in the importance of community service—by involving them every step of the way. "I baked banana muffins by myself for a bake sale," says 13-year-old Meagan Bolden. In all, the community raised \$34,000. Youth Service Canada, a division of the federal human resources department, kicked in another \$23,800 as part of a new initiative called Neighbour Aid, whose goal is to

playground for their children. But the people of Bellevue wanted more than just a place for their kids to have fun. They also hoped to teach them a lesson in the importance of community service—by involving them every step of the way. "I baked banana muffins by myself for a bake sale," says 13-year-old Meagan Bolden. In all, the community raised \$34,000. Youth Service Canada, a division of the federal human resources department, kicked in another \$23,800 as part of a new initiative called Neighbour Aid, whose goal is to

Sullivan (left), Hard. "Now I could get a job when I couldn't get out the door."

NEECHI FOODS COMMUNITY STORE, WINNIPEG

Bartering for bannock

At the loaves into the dough, kneading it on the heavy stainless steel counter top, Lydia Marlock smiles and says, "I'm getting so strong. I could even wrestle my old man, and beat him." The Ojibwa woman started making bannock, a traditional native bread, more than 40 years ago for the men on her northern Manitoba reserve who would take it into the bush as their moose hunting rations. "Usually they would be gone for about two weeks," she says. "But when they ran out of bannock, they would come home." Now, Marlock makes up to 100 loaves each day in the Neechi Foods Community Store in inner-city Winnipeg, which is owned and operated by Marlock and eight other aboriginals, who also take an active part in local community work. The store—which has yet to make a profit, and takes its name from the Cree word for "bread"—sells quality food, sometimes at less than cost, to the city's poorest people. "Why should the big national stores take all the money out of our community without putting anything back?" asks manager Louise Chagnon, who helped found the enterprise in 1989. "We want to offer something different for our people."

And the differences are obvious. While Neechi sells the same selection of meat, dairy products, canned goods and vegetables, there is also a bit of business, applied and original, that didn't come out of a catalogue. A rock of aboriginal children's books and hand-made Ojibwa greeting cards made beside a colorful display of macaroni, made by local craftspeople who trade them for food. About 100 families from the Wanigan Indian reserve in Northern Ontario earn thousands of dollars each summer by gathering wild blueberries and shipping their paddings to Neechi.

Marlock's owners have also worked to effect broader changes in their decaying neighborhood. "With prostitution, drugs and gangs, this area turns into an early circus at night," says Chagnon. The staff has been working with police to upgrade local parks, and Marlock recently led a successful campaign for better street lighting. "The people we serve are at the bottom of the economic scale," says Chagnon. "We're just trying to make their lives better."

DON MCGILLIVRAY



Marlock (left), Chagnon crafting bannock for food



Bellevue kids taking initiative, moving 30 tons of sand

With the fund-raising completed, in mid-June 800 men, women and children rolled up their sleeves for five days of digging, landscaping, drafting and painting. "I helped, worked in the food court, and helped during construction," says Connor Savage, a consultant for Youth Service Canada. The result: a sprawling new park complete with swings, slides and other playground toys—and a community that has built for itself a sense of pride and accomplishment.

SANDRA FARRAR

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM, TORONTO

Straight talk from the street

He left home and dropped out of school at 15, living in group homes, selling drugs to survive, landing in jail three times—for assault, possession of firearms and theft. But when one of his closest friends "got pretty word" and lollled unconscious during a botched robbery attempt last year, Larose Hampton, now 20, took it as a sign to head back to school and begin turning his life around. In the process, the tall redheaded teen with a tightly clipped goatee and a gold nose ring has also been working hard to reverse the paths of other young people who may be living with a life on the streets. He does so in one of 18 students enrolled in the Ambassador Program, administered jointly by the Toronto Board of Education and seven local social service agencies, including Beat the Street and Youth Link.

Completing their high school diplomas in the mornings, the "student ambassadors" spend their afternoons visiting senior elementary and secondary schools across the city, presenting unvarnished accounts of life as inner-city dropouts. "When we talk about drugs, I tell them there are mothers out there who aren't buying diapers for their kids," says Hampton. "When they ask about gangs, I tell them I joined a group because I needed people to care about me, but that when I went to jail, people forgot I ever existed."

Although their message is often sobering, the ambassadors often encouragement as well. "So many young kids feel desperate and hopeless," says teacher and program designer Linda Hinscherry. "The students we visit hear some pretty eye-opening stories, but they also meet three-dimensional proof of survival and hope." For Hampton, that is reason enough to be part of the program. "You sure I don't help every kid I meet," he says, adjusting his Cleveland Indians cap and slouching in his chair, "but I think I help some of them, and you know, that's pretty cool."

VICTOR DRYER



Ambassadors Reg Simon (left), Lee Anne Stevens, Manager, service and hope

ALBERTA ECOTRUST FOUNDATION, CALGARY

Partners in environmental preservation

It may seem unusual to the face of it: industry working in tandem with environmentalists. Like that is what members of the Alberta Ecotrust Foundation have been doing for five years. The Calgary-based foundation recently signed the million-dollar mark in grants, having doled out a total of \$2,000,000 to 22 grassroots environmental projects throughout Alberta. On the corporate side, so-called sustaining members of Ecotrust—including Petro-Canada and the Canadian Pacific Railway Foundation—agree to per \$25,000 a year for three years into the land. The environmental member organizations agree to formally endorse Ecotrust for the same time period. Together, 10 representatives from each sector decide by consensus which projects should be funded. "It enhances relationships between two sectors that are often at odds," says Randy Gossen, the corporate sector co-chairman of Ecotrust and a vice-president of another mining company, Canadian Occidental.

Other Ecotrust projects include environmental education and conservation programs as well as recycling efforts. Among the criteria for funding is that projects include a substantial number of volunteers. In 1994, Ecotrust funded the



Waterton Park Community Association Green Team, located in Waterton Lakes National Park in southeastern Alberta, for a project that included the purchase of a trailer to collect household recyclables. The group recently won further Ecotrust funding for several smaller initiatives—including a composting pilot project, the hiring of two part-time field workers to

provide recycling service to local residents and businesses, and the purchase of social containers to collect cardboard cardboard for recycling. "With all the downscaling, it's heartening that green initiatives are being recognized as important," says Carol Watt, an objective member and the long-time chairwoman of the Green Team Committee. On Canada Day, Watt's years of service with the Green Team and her volunteer work with other local organizations will be recognized; she will be among the first 15 people to receive the Governor General's new Green Canadian Award, which recognizes individuals whose unpaid voluntary contributions provide extraordinary help or care to families or groups in the community. Indeed, extraordinary people like Watt are turning Ecotrust funding into environmental action.

MARY MENECHI



Watt adding hard-edged resources to traditional social objectives

CORPO, VICTORIAVILLE, QUE.

Community headquarters

On several counts, William Nitacs is an unusual fellow. For a start, he is a transplant from southern Ontario who has managed to co-exist a considerable distance from himself in southern Quebec, in a town where the population is not only 98 per cent francophone but 85 per cent ethnically French speaking. That by itself is no small feat, never mind the fact that the 56-year-old former accountant is the victim of a rare neurological disorder called Charcot-Marie-Tooth Syndrome that gradually strangles all the muscles in his body. But his reputation rests on something more than mastering the French language and having a crippling physical affliction. Nitacs is the principal architect of an elegantly simple yet effective experiment in community development. "Don't try to paint me as some kind of hero," Nitacs protests. "I was simply the guy in the hot seat at the time."

The time was 1988 and the seat that Nitacs occupied was coordinator of the Corporation de développement communautaire des Basses-Plaines de l'Estrie, better known as Inc. Corpo. A coalition of 99 grassroots cooperatives, community organizations and service groups, the Corpo was, and still is, based in Victoriaville, a town of 15,000, 120 km east of Montreal, where Nitacs has lived for 30 years. And despite his protests, it was Nitacs who helped to steer the Corpo down a new path, adding a hard-edged element of marketplace economics to the organization's traditional social objectives. He did so by engineering the acquisition, for a nominal fee, of an 18-hectare 62,000-square-foot Hydro-Quebec installation in Victoriaville. "That gave us a capital equity base," he explains. "Without that, we could not mortgage. Without the ability to mortgag, we could not obtain financing. And without financing, we simply had no control over our own destiny."

Nitacs, who is currently completing a PhD in social work at Laval University in Quebec City, stepped down as coordinator of the Corpo in 1992, but remains a member. "I'm still not sure why," he jokes. "But that's the year my mother died, my father died, and my kidney finally put me in a wheelchair for good."

The former Hydro-Quebec building, however, has blossomed into a unique financial concern. As it houses the offices of 25 community-based organizations including a worker furniture plant employing handicapped workers, a soup kitchen, a job counseling centre, an AIDS advocacy group and three recycling operations, including one that recycles used clothing. "That store's revenues are now approaching \$200,000 annually," Nitacs proudly notes. "That's a lot of 20-cent items." And a lot of financial clout for the Corpo.

BARRY CAME

ABILITY ONLINE, TORONTO

Inspired connections

Dr. Arctic Lefebvre voice falters, remembering her first encounter with a young patient named Laura. The Grade 3 student had contracted meningitis and—*to save her life*—doctors had to amputate her legs. "She was a fragile skeleton," says Lefebvre, a physician at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children where Laura was treated. "She woke up without legs—she was depressed, she didn't want to live, she didn't want to eat. I thought, How can I give this kid hope that there is a life without legs?" So help Laura deal with her loss, Lefebvre founded her up to Ability OnLine, an innovative electronic support group she had established a year earlier. "One good role model is worth a thousand shrinks," Lefebvre contends. "I put her in touch by computer with Carlos Costa, a wonderful survivor without legs. Now, she is Rediscovering her physical legs."

Ability OnLine—the first service of its kind in Canada—handles about 1,200 calls a day across Canada, the United States, Europe and Australia. The free e-mail link allows chronically disabled or disabled children to communicate from their homes or hospital beds with others who share a disability, as well as with friends, family, classmates and volunteers mentors. "We've got our own message board," says Lefebvre, who started the program six years ago with a single computer. Her first attempt to put on an on-line conference in children's homes of children she had met or "connected" on a computer bulletin board. "Ten of us with a variety of disabilities, and someone says, 'You idiot, you don't know how to spell monitor,'" says Lefebvre. "The kids got discouraged."

But Lefebvre—*former Ministerie*, affectionately called Dr. Froggle by her young patients—had glimpsed the potential of an electronic support group and she refused to give up. In 1992, she

Lefebvre (center) and pals: One good role model is worth a thousand shrinks'

realized her plan for a "friendly on-line environment" with the help of Bruce Hahn, a retired firefighter and computer wizard, a corps of volunteers and donations from private sources. Ability OnLine now has more than 5,100 current users, but Lefebvre is determined to expand. "My dream is to have a laptop in every [hospital room] and on every [airplane]!" says Lefebvre. "The more I think, the more I realize that people aren't disabled." I said, "I don't know, I don't ask." One kid had been begging on for a year before he said, "By the way, I'm not disabled," says Lefebvre who spends five hours every evening answering children's e-mail messages. "Putting people in touch with each other," she says, "is my main goal. With Ability OnLine, Dr. Froggle found a way to do just that."

PHILIPPE DOYLE BREWER

losing about for more than 200 local businesses, principally in the food, transportation and printing sectors. As well, it has provided training in such skills as job-search techniques and computer literacy for close to 2,200 unemployed area residents. Of about 1,000 people who turned to RESO in its last fiscal year, roughly 200 have secured jobs. Another 300 returned to school, 100 found apprenticeships.

The organization has achieved its goals through a combination of innovation and common sense. Lobbying by RESO has kept further factories from being built residential. And it helped save 300 jobs at a glass factory by discovering that financial literacy among production-line workers was standing in the way of modernization. To address the problem, RESO helped establish a literacy program, giving the union, company and a local literacy group to work together to resolve the situation. As a result, many workers are now able to maintain advanced manufacturing equipment and use personal computers. "Most problems have solutions," notes Neustadt. "But you can't find them until you identify the real nature of the problem. That is what RESO is all about."

RESO, MONTREAL

Neighborhood renaissance

RESO is the organization's name, a play on *réseau*, the French word for network as well as an acronym for the *Réseau pour le retour économique et durable du Sud-Ouest de Montréal*—the corporation for the economic and social revitalization of Southeast Montreal. A coalition of business, labor and community groups, RESO is dedicated to the rebirth of a once vital neighborhood on the fringe of the city's downtown. As the current decade opened, business was at wholesale flight from the crumbling factories that line the banks of the old Lachine Canal. At the same time, creeping gentrification was threatening to displace the population, as factories were being turned into expensive condominiums. RESO was created in 1990 in response to both trends. "All of us gradually realized that if we did not do something to help ourselves, nobody else would," says the organization's executive director, Nancy Neustadt.

Since RESO was created, it has provided management and sup-



VANCITY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, VANCOUVER

Helping the homeless

In an age of record bank profits and soaring service charges, the Vancouver City Savings Credit Union has managed to make community activism as important to its mandate as the bottom line. Now in its 30th year, it was founded by 54 individuals who between them contributed \$22 to create an initiative to provide loans and mortgages to people denied financing by traditional banks, especially in Vancouver's working-class east end. Now Canada's largest credit union with roughly \$4.5 billion in assets and 225,000 members, most of them located in British Columbia's Lower Mainland, VanCity as it is commonly known, turns a profit of its annual earnings—approximately \$300,000 a year—over to the VanCity Community Foundation, launched in 1989 with an initial

investment of \$1 million. The

foundation, whose permanent endowment has since risen to \$4.5 million, re-

Lypter grassroots recycling initiative for these on the street

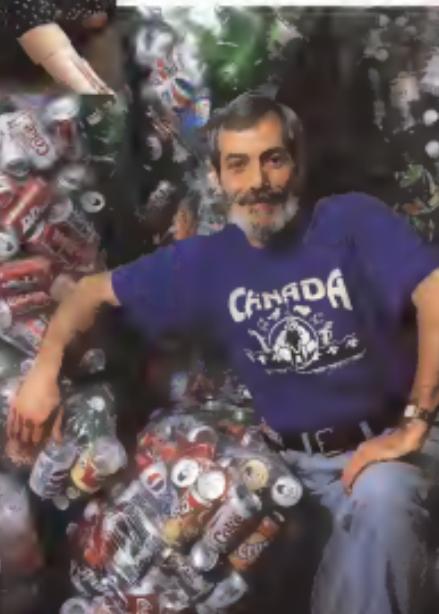
ceived \$900,000 in 1995, a third of which will go towards establishing the VanCity Place for Youth, a proposed drop-in center for street kids in downtown Vancouver. Other beneficiaries have included a counseling service for prostitutes wanting to get off the street, affordable housing projects for seniors and the disabled, and a pre-apprenticeship program for young prospects into mechanics. The foundation also lends money—sometimes interest-free—to community-based nonprofit groups to ensure their "long-term sustainability."

The foundation is clearly not afraid to take risks. Just ask Ken Lypter. From 1989 until 1994, the self-described "40-year-old skidophile and 'fallence Dampster diver'" created the alleys-and-garbage bins of downtown Vancouver—which has no blue-bin recycling program in high-density buildings—for beat kids and ones he could return to local retailers. Probably wise, there were funds on hand every month would accept. Lypter and other street people in the city's Downtown Eastside—the neighborhood with the lowest per capita income in Canada—decided to begin a grassroots recycling initiative. Predicting that they could gather five million bottles and cans a year at a central location,

Just ask Ken Lypter. From 1989 until 1994, the self-described "40-year-old skidophile and 'fallence Dampster diver'" created the alleys-and-garbage bins of downtown Vancouver—which has no blue-bin recycling program in high-density buildings—for beat kids and ones he could return to local retailers. Probably wise, there were funds on hand every month would accept. Lypter and other street people in the city's Downtown Eastside—the neighborhood with the lowest per capita income in Canada—decided to begin a grassroots recycling initiative. Predicting that they could gather five million bottles and cans a year at a central location,

According to the self-styled Lypter, now 42, author and general manager of the facility, which employs four full-time sorters and four part-timers, up to 400 people a day bring in bottles and cans for cash. Heading their spoils in shopping carts and green garbage bags, many are homeless, have problems with substance abuse or suffer from mental illness. In just 18 months, United We Can has not only met its commitments to VanCity but has also paid out nearly \$600,000 in cash to the collectors—and has provided a much-needed environmental service. In a special fund-raising initiative last Christmas, the nonprofit organization set aside a box in which its gathers, some of which have nothing, could donate an empty container or two. The proceeds—\$197 in all—went to a child-care centre across the street. "These are some of the most wonderful people you could ever meet," says Lypter. "They have lives that can make you weep and jump for joy at the same time."

SCOTT STEELE



BARRY CALK



Hall and courier Carolyn
Senior psychiatric survivors
fight the stereotypes

The notion grew out of the trend to de-institutionalize psychiatric patients. But since released, most found they were a source of anguish as round of rejections and boredom, and they usually landed back in the hospital. "No employer was going to hire a psychiatric survivor," says Hall. "There's still such a stigma attached. People have a real fear of mental illness." But one group decided to take the problem into its own hands. With a grant from the Ontario ministry of health—and advice from a board member who ran her own delivery company—they settled on a courier business where the messengers, each outfitted with a two-way radio and a public transit pass, travelled by foot, bus and subway instead of bicycle or car. That gave those barred from driving because of their medication a chance to work. Unlike other businesses, A-Way tailored its modes of operation to meet its employees' needs, allowing leaves of absence for treatment or hospitalization.

Paying each courier a 70-per-cent commission as each delivery, it started out with a handful of government and social service agency accounts. Now, as its roster of 1,000 clients includes hospitals, credit unions and restaurants, A-Way covers a year's move to other jobs, and like the ones who allow them, helps the conventional wisdom that these groups are unemployable. Instead, for many, the sole restraint on their evolution is the top line of a monthly budget that allows them to make only \$300 a month extra before being subject to deduction. But half of A-Way's clients opt for that generosity—and stigma recedes. "You can get out of the house and bring a cheque to the bank that isn't a welfare cheque," says Hall. "It's that self-esteem stuff we're paying for that."

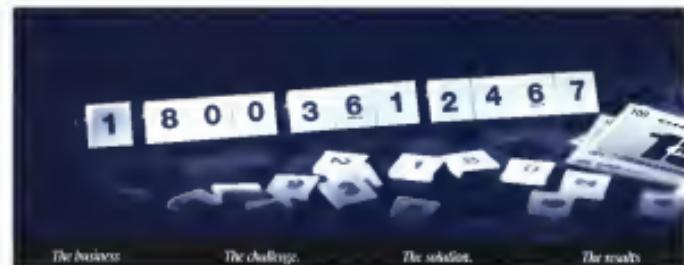
Last year, A-Way made a 30-per-cent profit on \$120,000 in billings, but it has not been without turbulence. Geographically, a courier group disassociated and has to be hauled out on the road. And three years ago, a ministry of health oversight team discovered the company's bookkeeping was in disarray. Ironically, that situation arose when professionals were in charge. When they left, Hall applied for the executive director's post—one of only a small number of psychiatric survivors among 40 applicants. A-Way's whereabouts still was not delighted when she was the pick. "It was one thing to be a courier," says Hall. "That was the very bottom," she says. "Absolute hell."

But, packing back to health, she suddenly found a reason to get up each day: a job she landed as a part-time courier at A-Way, a delivery firm launched in 1987 by former patients of mental institutions who call themselves "psychiatric survivors." In A-Way's community room, the rest others who had endured the same devastating struggles. Now, Hall serves as the \$42,000-a-year executive director of a nonprofit company that is entirely run by psychiatric survivors. Despite its 40 couriers to its office staff of 17, which includes dispatchers and bookkeepers, Fresh from celebrating its tenth anniversary last month, A-Way has been hailed as a model of its kind both in the country and abroad—an innovative attempt to tackle the estimated 85-per-cent unemployment rate among those with a history of mental health problems. "A-Way was a model of life and death for me," says Hall. "It made the difference that helped me survive."

MARCI McDONALD

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The business

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COVER LOCAL HEROES

A-WAY EXPRESS, TORONTO

Finding a route to independence

In a second-floor walk-up above a Toronto dry-cleaning shop, a poster on the office walls asks, "What do Alannah Livier, William Churchill, Grace Mahler and most of your friends have in common?" The answer: "Depressive illness." "The reminder has more than the usual resonance for Louise Hall, the sunny 54-year-old executive director of A-Way Express Courier Service. From the age of 19, Hall was in and out of psychiatric wards with a mindboggling range of diagnoses that kept her dependent on mind-altering drugs. Finally, her doctor advised her to quit her job as a veterinary technician. "I remember going to a bank trying to open an account with a welfare cheque," she says, "and they laughed at me. I was so humiliated." In 1981, after a stay in grim纠正ing houses and living on the street, Hall attempted suicide—swallowing her psychiatrist's supply of medication in a single gulp. When she woke from a coma, she discovered a chunk of her bowel had been cut out. "That was the very bottom," she says. "Absolute hell."

But, packing back to health, she suddenly found a reason to get up each day: a job she landed as a part-time courier at A-Way, a delivery firm launched in 1987 by former patients of mental institutions who call themselves "psychiatric survivors." In A-Way's community room, the rest others who had endured the same devastating struggles. Now, Hall serves as the \$42,000-a-year executive director of a nonprofit company that is entirely run by psychiatric survivors. Despite its 40 couriers to its office staff of 17, which includes dispatchers and bookkeepers, Fresh from celebrating its tenth anniversary last month, A-Way has been hailed as a model of its kind both in the country and abroad—an innovative attempt to tackle the estimated 85-per-cent unemployment rate among those with a history of mental health problems. "A-Way was a model of life and death for me," says Hall. "It made the difference that helped me survive."



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More than six feet tall, broad-shouldered and good-looking, James Ehnes hardly fits the popular stereotype of a former child prodigy. Fond of Formula 1 and playing baseball and basketball, Ehnes every other sport that could damage his fingers," his manager, Walter Hoenninger, wryly adds, the 30-year-old violinist from Brandon, Man., has the fresh complexion and easy smile of someone at home on the Prairies. But Ehnes—once described by renowned American violinist (and former Juilliard student) Itzhak Perlman as "a talent that comes around once in 100 years"—happens to be equally at home on the stages of some of the world's great concert halls.

As he sips a Coke at a Toronto coffee shop recently, Ehnes sounds disarmingly unpretentious—a quality that stands out in his performances. Critics have repeatedly observed that, despite his extraordinary virtuosity, Ehnes puts the music ahead of the spectacle. "I'm not going to gear my playing towards the concert," Ehnes says, insisting that his own personal stamp is less important than denouncing the panic of what the composer really wrote. For his first CD, *Paganini*—on the Cleveland-based Telarc label, with which he has just signed an exclusive, five-year recording contract—Ehnes chose music he has been exploring for more than a decade. Asked during an appearance on a Winnipeg television show when he was 9 what his favorite music was, Ehnes replied that he liked "fast playing." His questioner prodded him after he'd listened to Itzhak Perlman's recording of Paganini's Caprice, and Ehnes has been playing those fiendishly difficult pieces ever since.

Ehnes comes by his artistry, leanings, naturally. His mother is a former dancer with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, and his father, Graches Trauner at Brandon University (his 10-year-old son likes to sing and play the piano, as well as dance and write). He got his first violin when he was 5 and never looked back, studying with the late Canadian violinist Francis Chaplin and later with Sally Thomas at the Grand Conservatory of Music in upscale New York. Competitions have played an important role in getting Ehnes noticed, and when he was young, they provided the only opportunities he had to perform. He looks back with bemusement at the difficulty of some of the music he was playing then: "But it's a lstd," he says. "I never thought about whether something was hard or easy. I just played it."

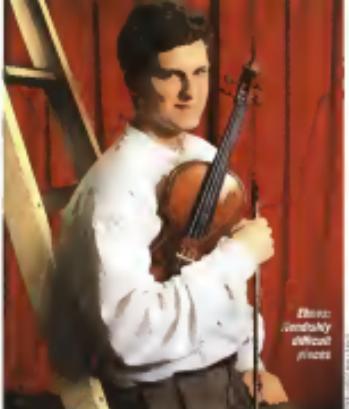
His first big win was at the age of 15, when he won the Grand Prize in String at the Canadian Music Competition. More recently, in 1993, he was CBC Radio's 21st National Competition for Young Performers. Neil Gory, CBC's co-ordinating producer for the competition, remembers that Ehnes's Winnipeg audition was so exciting that "the jury literally had to sit on their hands to keep from applauding."

A Canadian violin virtuoso makes his recording debut

"It's a weird way to live," Ehnes says, referring to a performing schedule that takes him all over the world, including concerts in Berlin and St. Petersburg last year, an upcoming date in Hong Kong and a performance at the Hollywood Bowl in August. "Sometimes it's lonely, but I'm a great traveler," he says. "I walk everywhere and see everything."

Ehnes's schedule does not often permit him to be a tourist outside the job, but this spring he took a rare two weeks off to drive across the United States with his older brother, who just graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. They were not, however, driving a Ferrari. That will have to wait until Ehnes finds a way of securing that other expensive Italian import, a Steinway.

ELISSA POOLE



A Prairie boy meets Paganini

"It's a weird way to live," Ehnes continues that he's a single rock 'n' roll recording. And he has no roommates in New York City where Ehnes is working on a bachelor's degree in music at the Juilliard School, share a collection of approximately 800 classical CDs. "The real training doesn't happen at the institution," he says, and listening to other musicians is one way the learning goes on when his fingers are still. Even so, he practices a minimum of two hours a day, and often plays all day long, sometimes spending as much time at the piano as he does at his violin.

Rather than rushing his career, Ehnes is taking one step at a time, continuing at the Juilliard (where he is often in trouble for his frequent absences to play concert), and adding to an already impressive repertoire of concertos. Next year he is scheduled to play 10 different concertos, from Vivaldi to Shostakovich, bringing the number he has performed in public to 25. He has another 15 at his fingertips, ready to go.

The dark side of Utopia

An author casts a cold eye on the chaotic Sixties

BABEL TOWER

By A. S. Byatt

Random House, 625 pages, \$30

A s Byatt's new novel, *Babel Tower*, puts it among that select company of novels—including such classics as Daniel Defoe, Charles Dickens and Doro Lessing—whose books hold up a mirror to a society at a crucial moment in its history. The English writer is already well-known in North America for *Borrowed Time*, her bestselling 1990 book that generated a fascinating low-story sort of two-soldiers' version of a literary mystery. Cambridge-educated, and with well-known expertise as a lecturer, reviewer and broadcaster, Byatt knows the British academic and intellectual worlds inside out, so it is hardly surprising that she should turn to that subject in *Babel Tower*. And once more, her solidly pugnacious and erudite literary choices are in abundant evidence. But what projects *Babel Tower* into a whole new orbit of achievement is Byatt's fresh and lucidly intelligent interpretation of the Sixties—when many world wars have been discontinued to death.

The heroine of *Babel Tower*, Frederica Potter, will be familiar to readers of Byatt's earlier novels, *The Virgin in the Gavels* and *Saints and Sinners*. Those books traced her life as a schoolteacher's daughter from the north of England, through a love-bittered undergraduate career at Cambridge. As *Babel Tower* opens in 1964, Frederica has gotten herself into deeper waters. Raging from the sexual demands of her sister, Stephanie, and huffily hoping to ascribe herself in so-called real life, Frederica has married the decidedly unattractive Nigel Rover, the rich owner of a country estate. They have a child, four-year-old Leo, but Frederica is feeling bored and unsatisfied. Fearing she has ruined her life, she tries to convince Nigel that she should have her own career. But the inflexible and controlling Nigel refuses, and increasingly places her demands with violence. Finally, he leaves all career and wanders off with an ex-

girlfriend's nightmare escape to London with her son, and Nigel's notorious journal of them, are what lead *Babel Tower* most of its narrative drive. Frederica becomes a working mother, trying together an impossible life: lecturing, reviewing and reading manuscripts for a publishing company. She discovers a London settling with new

literary energy. The Beatles are on the rise, education is in crisis, soldiers and long hair are in, while many artists are enthusiastically rejecting all influences from the past. Frederica, with her analytical mind and academic training, views all this with a skeptical curiosity—and many of the novel's most penetrating insights arise from her experience.

Byatt goes well beyond simply cat-



Byatt is a master of playful wit and effortless storytelling ability

alizing or romanticizing Sixties social phenomena. Byatt views the era in terms of the ancient tension between traditional norms and individualism. In the Sixties, the balance tilted dramatically in favor of the latter. Frederica does not condone this situation; she herself has benefited from the new freedom for women. But at the same time, the novel echoes the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel, evoking a world where multiplying individuals seek to be creating a cacophony of mutually incomprehensible voices.

Of course, the phenomenon is not limited to the Sixties; it is a characteristic of a multicultural, globalized-dominated world. But Byatt has focused on a moment of frenzied hope, when it was widely believed the changes would lead to a better society. The novel, on the whole, does not share that optimism. In passages

of subtle satire, it suggests that too much freedom can lead to anarchy—or to a whole new kind of conformity. In one arresting section, Byatt portrays a travelling committee that is studying the British educational system, one of its more colorful members likes to boast that his own oral poetry at students while encouraging them to rebel against their teachers.

The theme of limitless freedom also informs *Babel Tower*, a novel folded within *Babel Tower*, and written by one of Frederica's new acquaintances, the insatiable and foul-smelling artist's model, Jude Marion. Her life, which results in a landmark obscenity trial—follows a group of nobles who escape the terrors of the French Revolution in order to set up an ideal community where every person will have his deepest desires fulfilled. Their experiment leads not to Utopia, but to subjection and ruin.

JOHN HENDROSE

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BOOKS

Excavating the soul

FUGITIVE PIECES

By Anne Michaels
(McGraw-Hill, \$18.95,
256 pages, \$18.95)

In Anne Michaels' evocative first novel, the narrator, a Polish Jew orphaned by the Second World War, ponders the lasting effects of a single human gesture. "If the evil act can't be erased, then neither can the good," Jakob Beer writes in a memoir. "It's as good a measure of society as any to see the smallest act of blindness that is considered heroic." Is war, Poland, however, could be something as subtle as closing your eyes while a man escaped across a field. In Jakob's case, it was more dramatic: after Nazis slaughtered his parents and abducted his sister, he was rescued by Athos, a Greek shepherd, who smuggled the contrabanded seven-year-old boy out of the country to his Greek island home. The terrible events of Jakob's childhood do not fade, despite Athos's loving care. And Jakob's lifelong inner turmoil—has need to remember and has need to forget—has a haunting resonance, especially for this book's other main character, Bea, the Canadian son of Jewish refugees.

But to describe *Fugitive Pieces* as the story of Holocaust survivors is too limiting. Michaels, a 36-year-old award-winning poet, explores the urgent claims of the past on the present, how one can become "endless by memory, a mind that has no room for a moment of share." And the Toronto-based author's arresting, image-laden prose and evocative language, at everything from biology to literature, give the novel a startling originality. Indeed, foreign rights to the novel have been sold to publishers in Australia, the United States and Britain, and several other countries—a rarity for first-time fiction.

Michaels beautifully conveys the book's different settings—the ancient city lying beneath Biskupin, Poland, where Jakob was born, a day Greek island and 1950s Toronto—by viewing them through the eyes of a natural scientist. When Athos accepts an invitation to teach at the Universi-



Michaels: writing in everything from *Bible* to *Exodus*

ty of Toronto's geology department, he and Jakob explore their adopted city as if they were discovering a new archaeological site, uncovering its ancient stresses and fossil form and bone.

Fugitive Pieces forgoes linear storytelling for a poetic, multi-layered reminiscence. Most of the book's events—Jakob's rescue, Athos's death, Jakob's return to Greece to write, and his May December second marriage, to cancer patient Michaels (mother excavator of the past) and her son, Jakob—occur simultaneously at Jakob's present home. His journals interweave his own story of loss with survivors' accounts of Nazi-inflicted horrors and scraps of poetry and philosophy. Like those notebooks after spiritual redemption in *Ben-Hur*, life and marriage have become accented by the revelation of a long-buried secret from his parents' war experiences.

While occasionally the book's gorgeous, heightened language threatens to overwhelm the reader, *Fugitive Pieces* offers many pleasures. Like Athos and Jakob, Michaels has dug deep and come up with treasure.

DIANE TURKINKE

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Schwarzenegger...
Are these still good—again?

Schwarzenegger downloads data—and the bad guys

ERASER

Directed by Charles Russell

Questions in which of that summer's big action movies does a hero escape from a tight spot by shooting a giant squid? Hint: Later in the movie, charging himself as an emergency worker, the hero sneaks into a heavily secured building to download information from a computer housed in a giant vault.

The answer, of course, is *Mission Impossible*. But the answer is also *Eraser*. Somehow, either through an act of creative espionage or a Duke of small minds thinking also, Hollywood has managed to create two summer blockbusters with sequences featuring U.S. agents who hack top-secret data from hard drives in white vaults. The conceit, however, ends there. While *Mission Impossible* is a sleek, well-crafted, deviously cryptic suspense thriller, *Eraser* is an amalgam of stunts, shootouts and explosions linked by a lousy, blundering script.

Arnold Schwarzenegger plays John Krieger, a federal marshal who works for the U.S. Witness Protection Program

in which of that summer's big action movies does a hero escape from a tight spot by shooting a giant squid? Hint: Later in the movie, charging himself as an emergency worker, the hero sneaks into a heavily secured building to download information from a computer housed in a giant vault.

Despite some impressive firepower, the movie is grossly derivative. After all, there is just a fine line between emulating and lampooning, and *Eraser* steals many of its gags from the *Terminator* movies—including scenes of Schwarzenegger pronouncing his anatomical flesh is pierced by sharp objects, which have to be painfully extricated by his co-star. It's a pale replica of the prototype. And as Krieger rubs out anybody who gets in his way, the one thing he seems incapable of erasing is the cliché of his own image.

GRIAN D. JOHNSON

His job is to erase the identities of endangered witnesses and create new ones for them. But he spends much of his time evading his opponents, usually in his first major screen role, Yannessa Williams co-stars as the distressed dame, who discovers that her employer, a leading defense contractor, is plotting an illegal sale of advanced weaponry to the Russian mafia. The deal is shrouded in a high-level political conspiracy. And early in the story—deflating any suspense—it turns out that Krieger's boss (James Caan) is in cahoots with the enemy.

Schwarzenegger suffers his way through a cascade of española statuary, from leading off a gang of snappish illegals to skydiving without a parachute. But the essence of *Eraser* is gunplay. The bad guys are armed with the most advanced rifle known to man, a "red gun" that has X-ray sights and three projectiles in close to the speed of light. Inevitably, Arnie gets his mitts on these massive weapons and strikes a classic pose—holding one big trout on each big hand while his Scroops are as pampered as the trout in a state-of-the-art aquarium.

Although Schwarzenegger gets his hands on a bunch of weapons, he can usually get away with it because he can usually get away with it. Arnie seems to be just going through the motions, especially in his lone scenes with Williams, who seems stuck in a variation on *The Godfather*, but without the remorse.

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GRIAN D. JOHNSON

Cozying up to Quasi

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME
Directed by Kirk Wise and Gary Trousdale

As if it were not enough that the Americans have trashed Euro Disneyland in France, now Mickey Mouse has had his way with one of the great classics of French literature. The *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, Disney's 34th animated feature, turns Victor Hugo's epic tragedy into fang-tail schmaltz, while offering something tourists have been seeking for years—Paris without the French.

Hugo's 1831 novel has gone through four previous screen incarnations, starring Lon Chaney, Charles Laughton, Anthony Quinn and Anthony Hopkins, but this *Hunchback* is deformed beyond recognition. Essentially, it is a low-rent knockoff of *Beauty and the Beast*, without the magic or the charm. The Beast is Quasimodo (voiced by Tom Hulce), an oafish whose best friends are a trio of vengeful feline gypsies. And the Beauty is Esmeralda, a gawking gypsys with a plumping neckline and come-hither eyes the hue of a Hollywood swimming pool. (She is voiced by Diane Moore, who perhaps just stayed in character after shooting her new movie *Singlewhite*.)

It is hard to say what young children are supposed to make of a movie in which a giddy hulks has a hunchback, a convert and a white knight competing for her favor. The story-tattered Quasimodo is led to believe that he has a chance with Esmeralda despite his deformity. He worked master, the lecherous Frollo (Dong-Jay), harrumphs her carnal desires in the flames of his fireplace, then decides to burn her at the stake. But it is Phoebus (Kevin Kline), the handsome and heroic soldier, who finally gets the girl. So much for the hunchback's inner beauty.

Saving Quasimodo and Esmeralda from death, the film-makers stick a happy ending that makes no sense other than Hugo's novel. Aside from teaching a generation of kids how to mispronounce "notre," Disney has now patented the love triangle in which to one gets hurt. The music, meanwhile, is generic and uninspired. With the soaring angles of the cathedral looking like blueprints for a last-stage set, the movie comes across as a partisan storyboard for another Broadway musical—a quasi-movie.

B.B.J.



A hunchback and his love—Esmeralda



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Jane O'Hara

The baby boomers confront mortality

A couple of weeks ago, a fiber came through my mail slot carefully inviting me to an open house. Refreshments would be served to music played by a classical duo. (Thoughtful!) A children's area would be made available. (Thoughtful!) There was even going to be a draw for a color TV. (Commentary: Where do I sign up?)

There was just one catch. It was an open house for a funeral parlor. Not that I'm squeamish. I've visited the final stage times, generally finding these places orderly and comforting. After the big shock of a death, there are never any surprises in a funeral house: the grief is controlled, the carpets are clean and the coffee is always hot. But, as a rule, this is one branch of the service sector where the customer's opening principle is: "Don't call us, we'll call you."

I was struck by the clangor of so openly marketing mortality. And there were no down-the-hatches undertakers hoping to draw up some quick business. This was a class establishment known for outsourcing some of Toronto's wealthiest citizens. Maybe they hold open houses in brassy New York City or breezy San Francisco, or in Canadian vacation homes always kept a low profile, boasting on the margins of grief. There's no rent-a-hearse, after-discounts or take-to-cold-calling customers.

Clearly, something was afoot if this small old funeral parlor had decided to open its doors, blear the wreath of its clientele and throw a little light on its secret services. And why-not, they did. My mother thought holding an open house was a deplorable waste. My aunt seconded her. What next, they wondered? Multilevel marketing?

But not pals, in their 40s and 50s, didn't get very worked up about it. At worst, some thought it "creepy" at best, "postmodern" at all worse. But, after all, we are the age group these avant-garde funeralists were targeting, what with their after of free coffee and crayons all round for the kids. We are their future. When boomers start moving on to their final rewards, the demographics of dying will be a bonanza for the embalmers.

Our short but self-Important stay so far, we're proven ourselves both noisier and noisier than our parents. We have found meaning in our enlightened obsession with the everyday things they took for granted. It's my guess, if that trend continues, we won't take death lying down. Sure it may distract us, but it won't stop us from discussing it over cappuccino.

Given the plague of AIDS and the mighty flora of death on television, it's surprising we've come so late to the quidnunc of dying. But we have been busy. When you consider all the energy we've spent debating whether to use a choke chain on the new puppy or

whether to go with limestone in the bathroom, it's amazing how little thought we have given to the only two questions that really matter: how we got here and why we have to leave so soon.

I have a friend, just turned 50, who told me she's never been to a funeral parlor, never seen a dead body. That, to me, is like someone saying they've never been to a mall. But things are changing. It's pretty common these days to find the subject of death surfacing at dinner parties. Full-length obituaries are making a comeback. And no longer are dying writers leaving the last word to other writers. They're documenting their own deaths the endgame of first-person journalism.

"I am practicing making entries in my journal to record my passage into nonexistence," wrote New York intellectual Harold Brodsky before he died in January. Two weeks ago, Canadian comedian Manitoba Gross died but left us laughing after leaving a wacky funny piece in The New Yorker, entitled "Grief comes me." Twenty years ago, the jazz icon of the Ms. Generation, was another recent departure. Broadcaster that he was, he wanted to connect himself to the hereafter in real time on the Internet. Abilities to upload, download, to dust. He didn't manage that, but in his will gave us something better—his recipe for Lucy Biscuits. Biscuit cheese with marijuanna on a Ritz cracker.

They didn't serve Lucy Biscuits at the funeral parlor's open house. When I arrived at the door of the white building, the Jesus was polished, the attendants smiling. "Feel free to walk around," said a man in a strategically dark suit. "All these floors are open."

So I wandered. As advertised, a floor and half sounded in the middle distance. The main floor was set up with various displays showing the funeral home's religious versatility: Eastern Orthodox, Buddhist, Jewish, or a sit-down memorial service. One floor below were the caskets and cremation urns, all made of and makers, for rent or purchase. One is high-gauge steel and others made out of chipboard. The caskets made out of steel were an ungodly price, but they were apparently "safe from the elements" and came with a sticker that said "Because you care." For \$195, ashes would be shipped to some preacher in British Columbia who would sprinkle them in the Pacific.

The embalmer was on hand, too. He was in his tool shop at the back of the funeral parlor, talking about lip glue and plastic surgery. He was, an happy and chatty as Mr. Rogers in his neighbor hood. I counted about 10 other embalmers. I was the youngest. People spoke in whispers, which made it hard to eavesdrop, but I managed, learning among other things that it takes about three hours for a body to be prepared during cremation.

On my way out, I was thanked for coming and handed a videotape, in case I had "any other questions." I did, but I knew they wouldn't be answered by watching my VCR.

It's amazing how little thought we have given to two questions: how we got here and why we have to leave so soon



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